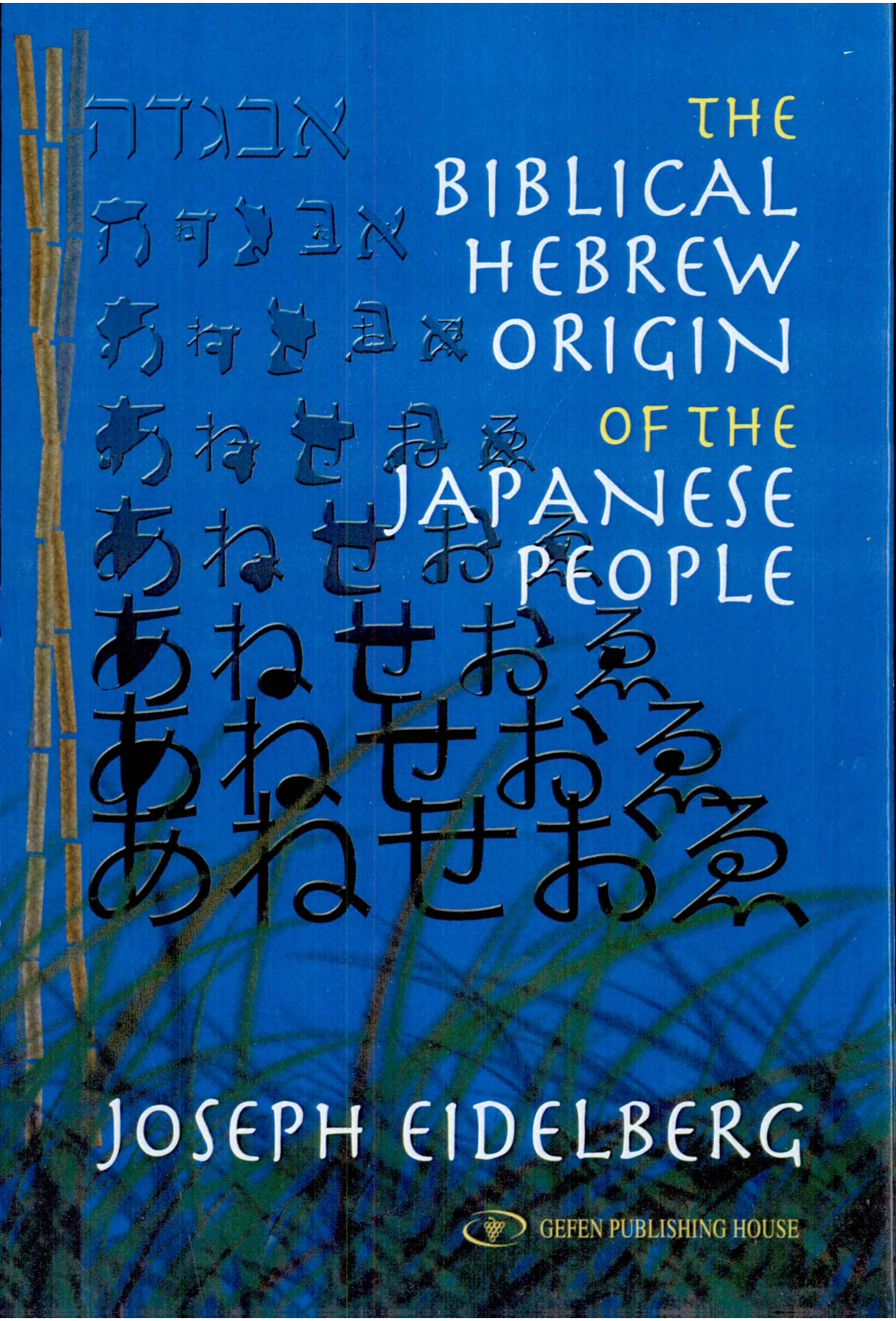
THE
BIBLICAL
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ORIGIN
OF THE
JAPANESE
PEOPLE
JOSEPH EIDELBERG
GEFEN PUBLISHING HOUSE

THE BIBLICAL HEBREW ORIGIN OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE

This One

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THE BIBLICAL HEBREW ORIGIN OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE

JOSEPH EIDELBERG

gefen publishing house
JERUSALEM • NEW YORK

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PREFACE

The Japanese are one of the leading industrial nations in the world today, yet their distant past is completely shrouded in mystery. No one knows how they came to their present islands and, up until now, neither historical research, nor linguistic studies, nor archeological explorations have found an answer to the riddle of their past. This book investigates their origin from an altogether new angle.

The starting point for my inquiry about the origin of the Japanese people was quite fortuitous. While trying to gather some evidence concerning the strange disappearance of the Ten Tribes of Israel exiled by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.E., I discovered, to my amazement, that the "loss" of the Hebrew tribes occurred at about the same time that the ancient Japanese are believed to have come to the islands that are known today as Japan. Could there be a connection, I wondered, between the exile of the Ten Tribes of Israel from the Near East and the appearance of the people of Yamato, as the ancient Japanese are known to have been called, in the Far East?

Indeed, there is. Ancient traditions, religious ceremonies, historical names, *haiku* poems, idiomatic Hebrew expressions in the Japanese language, the *kana* writings, and even some Japanese folk songs all point to a strong connection between the ancient Kingdom of Samaria (Israel) and the existing Kingdom of Sumera (Japan). To the best of my knowledge, this is the first time that several disciplines are combined into a single consistent theory about the origin of the Japanese people.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to Jinja Honcho (The Association of Shinto Shrines) for enabling me to spend

some time as a novice at the Goo Jinja in Kyoto; to Mr. Yoshiharu Muraoka for presenting me with valuable information about Shinto; and to Mr. Toshiyuki Sakai, the former Chief Priest of the Goo Jinja, for showing me the beauty and simplicity of Shinto rituals. I would like to point out, however, that the responsibility for the views expressed in this book rests on me alone.

Joseph Eidelberg

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joseph Eidelberg: Israeli soldier, engineer, manager and scholar

The author, Joseph Eidelberg, was born in Odessa on February 8, 1916. At the age of seven he moved with his family to Palestine. His early days were spent in Jerusalem and Haifa, where his father had established his ironwork factories.

At the age of twenty-one, Joseph was sent by his father to England to study engineering, but shortly before World War Two, in 1939, he returned to Palestine and volunteered to become a special security officer for the British forces . His military career continued as an officer in the Israeli Defense Forces until the age of thirty-five. In 1952 Joseph went to the USA to complete his engineering studies and, at the age of thirty-eight, he became the general manager of the Dead Sea Works.

Later in his engineering carrier, while managing large Israeli overseas engineering operations, including Iran and Ivory Coast, the author discovered some interesting linguistic and cultural similarities between the Hebrew language and Bambara, spoken by an African tribe in Mali.

Joseph, by then fluent in seven languages, began exploring ancient

cultures, customs, symbols and words with great interest and unlimited curiosity. It soon became clear to him that through traces of culture, language and symbolic similarities between Hebrew, African languages and Japanese, he may have the right tools and the key to explore what were for him the most fascinating mysteries of Jewish history:

1. The forty-years Exodus of the Jewish people from Egypt to Israel through the Sinai desert – a distance which is typically covered by an average Bedouin tribe on camel or by foot in less than a week.
2. The disappearance of the ten tribes of Israel, who were forced into exile by the King of Assyria and were subsequently lost in history.

In 1972, after returning from the Ivory Coast, the author published his first book, *Bambara*, a story about Hebrew biblical footprints left in ancient African cultures that uncovers, as a fascinating step by step puzzle, the forty-year mysterious journey through African coasts, deserts, mountains and seas on the way from Egypt to Israel.

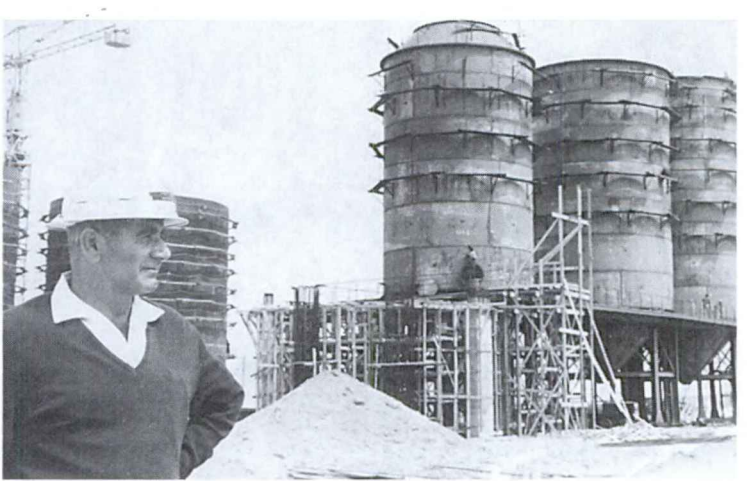
His engineering career, as a general manager of the Israeli Shipyard in Haifa, ended in 1974, when at the age of fifty-eight the author retired and devoted all of his time to the exploration of the mysterious story of the ten lost tribes. Through intensive research, travel, studies and religious practice, the author completed his second book, *The Japanese and the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel.* The book describes a fascinating story that once again uncovers the journey of the ten lost tribes of Israel through Asian lands and ends in the Far East and Japan. The author discovered many amazing similarities between the Japanese ancient cultures, mythology, language, handwriting, songs and traditional symbols that throw light, not only on the journey itself, but also on the roots of the Japanese people and its mysterious cultural sources. The book was translated into Japanese and sold over 40,000 copies. The author's extensive research, discoveries and original contributions were referenced in many proceedings, articles, seminars, further studies and writings.

Following the success of his first publication, Joseph continued his research and found thousands of words with similar pronunciations, sounds and meanings between Hebrew and Japanese, which he systematically logged into a dictionary. Fascinated by these discoveries, which could in fact explain, through Hebrew interpretation, the meaning of many

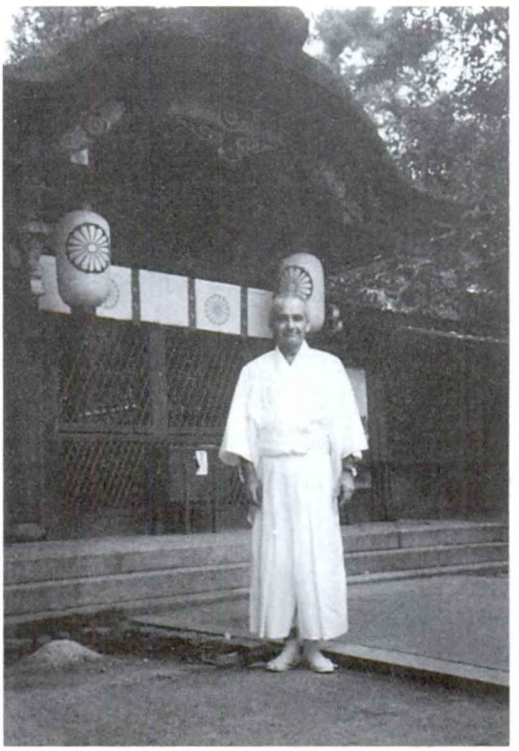
unknown Japanese words, numbers, songs and cultural origins, he then wrote his last manuscript "The Hebrew Origin of the Japanese People".

Joseph died in August 1985 at the age of sixty-nine and never saw the publication of his last work. His sister, the late Dina Harris, collected his latest work and assembled it in its present form. A few attempts were made by his son Boaz Eidelberg to publish the last manuscript. Finally, in early 2004, with the support of Rabbi Tokayer and Rev. Kubo, both of whom knew the author and his work, this manuscript became a book. Its publication concludes the story of a fascinating explorer, who was fortunate in life to be born free, defend the freedom of his country, study its deep roots of ancient history and finally fade away as an author, who strove to better understand his culture's unique heritage.

An Officer in the Israeli Defense Forces



A General Manager of the Dead Sea Works



A Scholar in a Shinto Shrine

Enjoying nature in Gan H'aem, Haifa

FOREWORD

My Father

I have always admired my father, from the early days of my childhood, when I first remember him as an officer in the Israeli Defense Forces, through the years of his engineering and management career, to his later years of exploratory linguistics work and his writing career.

I was fortunate to experience with him many childhood adventures, such as driving a car in the desert at the age of five, flying in a military plane at the age of seven, touring the world at the age of eight, and driving a John Deere tractor at the age of ten. I was fortunate to walk in his footsteps, complete my education in an Israeli military academy school, and graduate from some of the best engineering schools in the USA, all with my father's continued encouragement and support.

In later years we became good friends. I remember my father as a man with strong moral values, responsibility to family, soldiers, employees and friends. I remember him as a man of courage who stood by his principles, with loyalty to friends, fairness and truth. I remember him as a modest person in his everyday life, with great love for the wonders of nature, enthusiasm for travel and exploration, great passion for reading, photography, filming and writing, and, most of all, his great love of life.

He continues to live in my genes and my soul, and he is remembered

with love by his wife, Zipora, his brother Jonah, his grandchildren Yael and Tal Eidelberg, and many other members of his family, friends and colleagues.

Dr. Boaz Eidelberg

IN LOVING MEMORY OF JOSEPH EIDELBERG

My first meeting with Major Joseph (Yoske) Eidelberg occurred in the early 1950s in the Battalion Commanders' College of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). Both of us majors, Yoske represented the Engineer Corps while I came from the Infantry. We attended the same class and developed a friendship which lasted until his death.

Yoske possessed many important values – he had a smart, creative mind, a broad spectrum of interests, a natural sense of humor and a benevolent character. He also combined being an excellent practical manager with being an original and creative thinker.

After his retirement from the IDF, he successfully served as manager and industrial engineer, respectively, of two of the most important industrial enterprises in Israel – the Potash, Bromide and Magnesium Industries in the Dead Sea and the main Shipyard Industries in Haifa.

But Yoske was not just an efficient technological manager. He also developed a deep interest in the Bible and other ancient historical sources, gradually developing new theories about important historical events. Two of his theories have been published already: one deals with the ancient Hebrew Exodus from Egypt and the other with the expulsion of the Ten Tribes from the Holy Land by the Assyrians.

Regarding the Exodus, Yoske published a thesis claiming that Moses led the Israelites from Egypt to the Holy Land, not through Sinai, but by a long voyage (forty years) through the Sahara in North Africa, turning back eastwards, crossing the Strait of Bab el Mandab to Yemen and from there northwards to the Holy Land.

Yoske's second thesis dealt with the disappearance of the Ten Tribes after their expulsion by the Assyrians. After becoming acquainted with the Japanese language and culture, he found interesting similarities between Hebrew and Japanese, which led him to believe that at least a portion of the Ten Tribes reached East Asia, inserting some fragments of Jewish culture and language there. I understand that some academic Japanese circles would like to pursue this issue. In any case, Yoske was the first one to see a possible connection.

So this is (not "was") Yoske Eidelberg: an army officer, a friend, an excellent industrial manager and an original, creative scholar.

Colonel (ret.) Meir Pa'il, Ph.D.

Chapter one

In Search of Lost Tribes

The history of the human race abounds in mysterious events, which have not yet found an explanation. Of all these events, none is so intriguing, perhaps, as the strange disappearance of ten Hebrew tribes, known today as the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel.

Exiled by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.E., the Ten Tribes of Israel vanished mysteriously somewhere in Asia and no trace of them has ever been discovered. All we know about them is based on two short verses in the Bible telling us that, "The king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea [King of Israel], the King of Assyria took Samaria and carried Israel away into Assyria and placed them in Halah and in Habor, by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes."[1]

That was twenty-seven centuries ago, and we still know nothing of their fate. Did they emigrate to another land? Did they forget their identity? Or did they perish in one of the dreadful deserts of the Asian continent? No one knows. But the deep scar left upon the soul of the Hebrew nation by the loss of the Ten Tribes has never been completely healed. There has always been a hidden hope that someday the lost tribes would be found – and I decided to try to find them.

Having decided to search for the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, or at least

to learn more about their fate, my first problem was: How should I start looking for ten big tribes, lost twenty-seven centuries ago, without even knowing if they still exist? And if they exist, how would I recognize them? What language do they speak today and what religion do they profess? For, as far as we know, the belief of the Ten Tribes was not the same as the modern Jewish religion.

Having no answer to any of these questions, yet feeling that an answer must exist somewhere, I decided to begin my search for the lost tribes by examining the histories of all the Asian nations. Thus, I hoped, I might eventually come across some clues that would enable me to solve the mystery. And, indeed, while studying the early history of Japan, as described in a book titled *Nihon-Shoki (Nihongi)*, I discovered in it a strange similarity to the ancient history of the Hebrews; could the Japanese be the descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel?

At first sight, the mere thought that the Japanese might be the descendants of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel seemed to be absolutely incredible. With Mongolian features, living on the other side of the globe, and speaking a language that is unrelated to any other language family, could they actually be the descendants of Israel's lost tribes? Most unlikely. Yet a systematic comparison of the ancient history of the Japanese, as presented in the *Nihon-Shoki*, with the ancient history of the Hebrews, as described in the Bible, leads to the conclusion that some of the narratives in the two books present different versions of the same events. But before presenting some examples of such narratives, a few words about the background of the *Nihon-Shoki* are needed.

The origin of the Japanese people is completely lost in the midst of antiquity. No one knows where they came from. It is widely believed that some time between the first and third centuries of the Common Era, people immigrated to the islands of Japan and established a kingdom there called Yamato. The new immigrants, so it seems, were united by common traditions, spoke the same language, and observed the same religious laws of *kami-no-michi*, commonly known as Shinto.

For several centuries the people of Yamato continued to adhere to the traditional Shinto religion. Then in 552 C.E., in spite of strong opposition by Shinto leaders, Buddhism was introduced into Japan and adopted by some of the country's most influential families. As a result, a long-standing enmity ensued between the adherents of Shinto and the supporters of

Buddhism and this, eventually, led to a civil war in which all the ancient records of Yamato were destroyed by fire, leaving the nation without a written book.

The loss of the ancient records was a serious blow to the pride of the imperial court. Several centuries of Chinese influence, and the knowledge that China was very proud of its written history, were enough to convince the emperors of Japan that a civilized nation could not be without a written history of its monarchs. Consequently, in 712 C.E., following an imperial decree, the history of Yamato was written anew in a work known as *Kojiki*, literally "Records of Ancient Matters." However, since there were no historical records in Japan at that time, the compilers of the *Kojiki* were obliged to gather all their information from the mouths of professional reciters who, presumably, knew the history of Japan by heart. Eight years later, in 720 C.E., the *Nihon-Shoki*, literally "Chronicles of Japan," was compiled in the same way – from memory and oral tradition.

It is quite obvious, therefore, that in trying to evaluate the historical records of the *Nihon-Shoki*, we must take into account the fact that the information contained within its pages could not be more reliable than the memory of those who knew the history of Japan by heart. Hence, in comparing certain narratives of the *Nihon-Shoki* with those of the Bible, we should expect to find some inconsistencies. The inconsistencies, however, are outweighed by the similarity of the narrative in the two different texts and suggest a common origin of the stories.

Thus, for example, when the *Nihon-Shoki* says that the "children of the Heavenly Deity"[2] set out on a journey to conquer the land which the gods had given to their ancestors, while according to the Bible the "children of the Heavenly God," as the Hebrews are called in the Book of Deuteronomy (14:1), set out on a journey to conquer the land which God had promised to give to their ancestors, it is reasonable to suppose that the similarity between the two events is the result of a coincidence. But when we continue turning the pages of the *Nihon-Shoki* and discover that in the course of their efforts to conquer the land that the gods had given to their ancestors, the people of Yamato had to fight Yebisu tribes,[3] while according to the Bible "Yevusi" was the name of one of the tribes that had inhabited the "promised land" of the Hebrews,[4] we begin to suspect that the two stories refer, in effect, to the same land.

Our suspicion that the narratives in the *Nihon-Shoki* that depict the

early history of Yamato reflect, in fact, the ancient history of the Hebrews, grows much stronger when we compare the reigns of certain Japanese emperors with those of some ancient kings of Israel. It is very likely, for example, that the narratives in the *Nihon-Shoki* describing the reign of Emperor Chiuai, are variations – as exact as the memory of the professional reciters could bring out – of the biblical narratives dealing with King Shaul's (Saul) reign. According to the Bible, the stature of King Shaul was "from his shoulders and upward...higher than any of the people," while according to the *Nihon-Shoki*, the stature of Emperor Chiuai was ten feet. King Shaul participated in a battle "and [an arrow of] the archers hit him," while Emperor Chiuai "was hit by an enemy's arrow and slain." King Shaul was buried in the land of the tribe of Benjamin (2 Sam. 21:14), and according to the *Nihon-Shoki*, Emperor Chiuai was buried in Anato. Remarkably, the ancient Hebrew town of Anatot, not far from Jerusalem, was indeed in the territory of the tribe of Benjamin.

But Shaul is not the only Hebrew king whose reign, as an emperor of Yamato, is described in the ancient Japanese writings. Thus, for example, King David, considered as the great founder of the ancient Hebrew state, can be identified in the *Nihon-Shoki* as Emperor Sujin, "the august founder of the country."[5] King David took a census of his people, and so did Emperor Sujin. During King David's reign there was a famine that lasted three years, and during the reign of Emperor Sujin there was a plague that lasted three years. King David's army fought in "Mount Seir of Edom,"[6] while Emperor Sujin's army fought in "Yamashiro of Idomi."[7] However, bearing in mind some peculiarities of Japanese pronunciation, "Yama-Shiro" means, in effect, "Mount Seir," and it is most unlikely that there were two armies, of two different nations, fighting in two separate regions, each called "Mount Seir of Edom."

But the similarity does not end here. After the death of Emperor Sujin, his son Suinin ascended the throne, and after the death of King David, his son Solomon ascended the throne. King Solomon built the first Hebrew temple in the town of Yevus,[8] and Emperor Suinin built the first Shinto shrine at Ise. The Hebrew king made the "pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees," while the emperor of Yamato built more than eight hundred ponds to store water for irrigation.[9] According to the Bible, God appeared to King Solomon in a dream telling him that if he walked in the "Way of God," his life would be long;[10] and according to

the *Nihon-Shoki*, the Great God of Yamato delivered an oracle to Emperor Suinin telling him that if he were watchful in regard to ceremonies of worship, his life would be long.[11] But to be watchful in regard to ceremonies of worship, according to Yamato concepts, implied to observe the laws of Shinto – and "Shinto" indeed means "Way of God." Could the similarity between the two divine messages be attributed to coincidence, or was the Japanese "Way of God" somehow related to the Hebrew "Way of God?"

My search for the lost Hebrew tribes had reached a crucial juncture; for if Shinto was in some way related to the ancient Hebrew religion, then the Great God of Yamato must have been identical with the Great God of the Hebrews, and the people of Yamato – Hebrews!

To clarify this conjecture and to find out whether there was any relationship between the Japanese "Way of God" and the ancient Hebrew religion, I decided to become a novice at a Shinto shrine.

Chapter two

The Japanese "Way of God"

My decision to become better acquainted with the Japanese "Way of God" brought me in due course to Go-o Jinja, a small Shinto shrine in Kyoto, where I was to serve as a novice. There, in the serene atmosphere of the ancient capital of Japan, I would learn the basic concepts of Shinto.

On my arrival at the shrine, I was greeted warmly and invited to the *shamusho* – the shrine's office – where the chief priest explained my duties to me and sent me to purify myself by dipping in the hot water of an *O-furo* bath. Bathing made me ritually clean so that I could be shown how to don the priestly attire. Henceforth, I became a full-fledged novice ready to participate in all the shrine's activities.

My duties as a novice were simple. At six o'clock in the morning I participated in the first prayer in front of the shrine. From 6:30 to 7:30, during the daily tidy up for the shrine, I cleaned the courtyard and raked the garden. After that I returned to my quarters, put on the priestly attire, had an *asa-gohan* breakfast, and was ready for the morning service. At eight o'clock, when the beatings of the drum announced the beginning of the service, I washed my hands, rinsed my mouth, and, together with the other priests, entered the sanctuary.

After the morning service I was free. Sometimes I went to visit other shrines and temples in Kyoto; more often, however, I used to take some books, go to the nearby park of the old imperial palace, sit in the shade of a tree, and immerse myself in the study of Shinto.

Shinto, meaning "The Way of God," or "The Way of the Gods," can be described as a combination of nature-worship and ancestor deification. Its underlying principles rest on the belief that since gods, mankind and nature have common ancestors, then the mountains and the valleys, the waterfalls and the lakes, the trees and the flowers, the living and the dead, are all members of one eternal family whose life cycles are guided by divine forces. In revering these forces, which include the spirits of ancestors, the followers of Shinto express their gratitude for the present and their hope for a better future. There are no written codes of ethics, no idols, no images and no omnipotent gods. Yet the gods will "cause the waters of mountain gorges to change into sweet waters and to fertilize the young rice-plants, so that a full harvest might be reaped,"[1] so long as people observe the traditional laws of the community and follow in the footsteps of their forefathers.

The concept of "to follow in the footsteps of forefathers" also includes the worship of *kami*, who play a predominant role in the Shinto religion. The original meaning of the word *kami* is lost in antiquity, and its derivation is unknown. In a narrow sense, it is often used to designate deities and other divine beings whose spirits dwell in shrines called *yashiro*. In a wider sense, however, it is best described by Norinaga Motoori, the great Shinto theologian of the eighteenth century, who said, "The term *kami* is applied in the first place to the various deities of Heaven and Earth who are mentioned in the ancient records as well as to their spirits which reside in shrines where they are worshiped. Moreover, all other things whatsoever which deserve to be dreaded and revered for the extraordinary and preeminent powers they possess, are called *kami*."[2]

All *kami* are worshiped in shrines, and any natural spot of impressive beauty, marked off by a specially twined straw rope, called *shimenawa*, can serve as a shrine. More often though, a Shinto shrine consists of a group of wooden structures, built on a rectangular piece of land and surrounded by two pillars, which serves as a sacred gateway into the compound. Past this gateway, close to the entrance, there is usually a stone basin, equipped with bamboo ladles, where all those entering the shrine cleanse themselves

by washing their hands and rinsing their mouths. A little farther, adjoining the main pathway, stands an office building, called *shamusho*, where priests carry out administrative functions. Some shrines have special halls for ceremonial dances, and the Grand Shrine of Ise – the national shrine of Japan – has a special stable for keeping two sacred horses which the Emperor traditionally presents to the Sun Goddess Amaterasu. Most shrines also have standing stone lanterns, called *tooroo*, which are used on special occasions to illuminate the main pathway.

The main pathway leads to the oratory, behind which stands the *honden* sanctuary. In small shrines the oratory and the *honden* are located in the same hall; big shrines, however, have separate buildings for these functions. The function of the *honden* – the holy of holies of every Shinto shrine – is to shelter a symbolic item, such as a round mirror, a jewel, a pebble, or a spear, in which the spirit of the *kami* dwells. These symbolic articles, called *mitama-shiro*, are considered so sacred that even priests are prohibited from viewing them.

Normally, only priests are allowed into the *honden*, and then only for worshiping the spirit of the enshrined *kami*. The ceremony is simple. When the priests hear the beating of the drum that announces the service, they wash their hands, rinse their mouths, and enter the sanctuary facing the *honden*. An ancient music marks the beginning of the service, and the chief priest, facing an eight-legged table on which offerings of rice, wine, vegetables and fish are displayed on small wooden stands, starts by reciting the prayer. As soon as he finishes the recitations, one of the priests carries the offerings from the table, lifts them in a wavy motion and places them in front of that section of the *honden* which shelters the *mitama-shiro*. After that, all those present at the service bow twice in the direction of the *honden*, perform the ceremonial *kashiwade* hand clapping, bow twice again and leave the sanctuary.[3]

Although the service within the sanctuary is restricted to priests, many shrines become the focal points of seasonal feasts, known as *matsuri*, in which members of the local community, or delegates representing the Emperor, participate. The most important of these celebrations are the Prayer for Harvest, called *Toshigoi-no-matsuri* or *Kinen-sai*; the Festival of the First Fruits, known as *Niiname-sai*, and the General Purification ceremony – the *O-harai*.

The Festival of the Prayer for Harvest is held annually at the Grand

Shrine of Ise, on February 17, in the presence of the Emperor's delegates. Its purpose is to present offerings to the Sun Goddess Amaterasu, and to ask for a bountiful harvest, so that big mounds of first fruits can be offered to the deities.

The Festival of the First Fruits, celebrated at midnight in the sanctuary of the Imperial Court on November 23, is the most solemn and most mysterious of all Shinto ceremonies. The ritual, a thanksgiving for the harvest, is performed in the dim light of torches, with the Emperor acting as chief priest and worshiping a deity whose name is never mentioned.[4]

The General Purification ceremony, or the Great Exorcism, is performed twice a year: on the last day of the sixth month, and on the last day of the twelfth month. Its purpose is to absolve the Japanese people of all their physical and moral offences. The ritual consists of first reading a prayer – *norito* – that enumerates such heavenly and earthly sins as removing stakes from ricefields, sowing two kinds of seeds in the same field, incest, witchcraft and bodily pollution, and then asking the heavenly and earthly deities to take all these sins and throw them into the ocean.[5] After that the priest purifies the community by waving a special wand, called *nusa*, which has long strips of paper attached to it.

This festival was also known as the "Nakatomi" ritual, because in ancient times the reader of the purification *norito* was invariably a member of the priestly Nakatomi clan, whose ancestor, according to Japanese mythology, was the Heavenly Koyane. The name "Koyane" has no meaning in Japanese. But since Japanese mythology traces the lineage of the priestly Nakatomi clan to a heavenly being, is it possible, perhaps, that some of the narratives of the Japanese mythology reflect ancient memories of distant ancestors?

It is not always possible, of course, to establish the exact boundaries between historical fact and traditional myths in ancient writings. But since Shinto traditions link the world of heavenly deities with that of human beings, a short review of the salient points of Japanese mythology would not be amiss. The following, an epitomized version of the mythology, is based on ancient Japanese writings and on some esoteric traditions.

At the stage of creation, when the earth was not yet completely formed, the Heavenly Gods decided to send the male deity Izanagi and the female deity Izanami "to complete and solidify the drifting land." Thereupon, the two deities stood on the Heavenly Floating Bridge, and with the Heavenly

Jeweled Spear in their hands they stirred the brine below. When they lifted the spear, the brine drippings coagulated and formed an island called Onogoro.

Descending from heaven to the newly formed island, the divine couple erected a Heavenly Pillar and built a palace called Yapirodono. Immediately after that, Izanagi proposed to Izanami and they decided to perform the wedding ceremony by walking in a circle around the Heavenly Pillar: Izanagi walking around the pillar from the left and Izanami from the right. When they met, each of them exclaimed, "Ana-niyasi," and thus they became married.

Having married, the divine couple was united and begot fourteen islands and thirty-five deities. However, upon giving birth to the fire god, the female deity Izanami burnt herself and died.

Izanagi, bereaved of his wife and ritually unclean by her death, went to cleanse himself in the flowing waters of a stream. When he washed his left eye, Sun Goddess Amaterasu came into being; when he washed his right eye, Moon God Tsuki was created; and when he washed his nose, God Susano came into being.

Delighted with the three new deities, Izanagi appointed Sun Goddess Amaterasu to rule the plain of High Heaven, Moon God Tsuki to rule the realm of the night and God Susano to rule the ocean. However, while Goddess Amaterasu and God Tsuki accepted their assignments obediently, God Susano burst into tears and refused to rule the ocean; he cried and said that he wanted to depart to another land. His incessant weeping finally enraged Izanagi, and he agreed to his departure.

Before setting out on his journey, Susano decided to ascend to heaven and to take leave of his sister, Sun Goddess Amaterasu. However, instead of bidding her farewell, he threw himself into a wild rage and committed many sins, which his sister found unbearable. Eventually, he frightened his sister to such an extent that she hid herself in a rock cave, letting the Plain of High Heaven and the central Land of Reed Plains (Japan) sink into complete darkness.

As a result of the sudden darkness, the whole universe was in great confusion, and the screams of the deities were heard everywhere. At last the gods beseeched the Heavenly Koyane, the ancestor of the priestly Nakatomi clan, to find a way to bring the Sun Goddess out of hiding. Whereupon the Heavenly Koyane, assisted by another god, put a sacred *sakaki* tree in

front of the cave, decorated it with a big mirror and many *yasaka* beads, and began reciting the following solemn liturgy:

Hi-Fu-Mi-Yo-Itsu-Mu-Nana-Ya-Kokono-Towo[6]

When Sun Goddess Amaterasu heard this liturgy, she said, "Though of late many prayers have been addressed to me, of none has the language been so beautiful as this."[7] So she opened the door of the cave a little, and peeped out. One of the gods, who was waiting beside the door, pulled it open, and the radiance of the Sun Goddess filled the universe again. With the sun shining, the Heavenly Koyane recited the Great Purification Liturgy – to cleanse heaven from the pollution caused by Susano – and the gods rejoiced.

As peace returned to heaven, Goddess Amaterasu gave her grandson, Ninigi-no-Mikoto, a mirror, a sword and a string of *yasaka* beads, and sent him to rule the central Land of Reed Plains. She also assigned the Heavenly Koyane and some other deities to accompany her grandson and to assist him in his duties on earth. In 660 B.C.E. – according to *Nihon-Shoki* chronology – Ninigi-no-Mikoto's great grandson, Emperor Jimmu, became the first ruler of the people of Yamato.

This, in a very simple form, is the basic mythological story that explains the origin of the Japanese people. The mirror, the sword and the *yasaka* beads that Sun Goddess Amaterasu gave to her grandson are still used as sacred symbols of authority by Japanese emperors, and Shinto recognizes that its origin goes back to the mythological age.

At first sight, neither Shinto nor Japanese mythology shows any connection with another country. It all seems to have originated in the islands of Japan. A closer examination, however, reveals that some of the most important concepts of Shinto, and some of the least understood sections of the mythology, are both of Hebrew origin. Thus, for example, many of the heavenly and earthly sins enumerated in the General Purification ceremony, including the heavenly offence of sowing two kinds of seeds in the same field, are definitely listed as sins in ancient Hebrew writings.[8] Moreover, the wedding of Izanagi and Izanami was performed according to an ancient Hebrew tradition, which Jews all over the world still maintain; and the prayer that the Heavenly Koyane recited to entice Goddess Amaterasu

to open the door of her cave – a prayer whose words have no meaning in Japanese – was recited in a clear Hebrew language.

According to an ancient Hebrew custom, which is still observed in many Jewish communities, in the course of a wedding the bride has to walk in a circle around the groom, who represents the heavenly pillar; and that heavenly pillars do exist in the ancient Hebrew literature can be seen in the Book of Job (26:11) where it says, "The pillars of heaven tremble...."

The couple Izanagi and Izanami became "officially" married after walking around the Heavenly Pillar and exclaiming "Ana-niyasi" – an exclamation which has no meaning in Japanese. However, the Hebrew-Aramaic expression "Ana-nisa," of which the exclamation "Ana-niyasi" may be a slight corruption, simply means "I wed!"

While the expression "Ana-niyasi" is mentioned in the *Kojiki* (5:5), no record is left of the Heavenly Koyane's prayer. However, this prayer is so deeply implanted in Japanese tradition that today it is used for counting from one to ten; nevertheless, it is impossible to deny its Hebrew origin. Thus, the prayer recited by the Heavenly Koyane was:

Hi-Fu-Mi-Yo-Itsu-Mu-Nana-Ya-Kokono-Towo

Rewriting the same after rectifying some minor corruptions, we get:

Hi-Fa-Mi-Yo Tsia-Ma-Na'ne-Y-Kakhena-Tavo

Transliterating the new vocables into Hebrew characters (reading from right to left), we receive:

הי-פה-מי-יו-ציאה-מה-נענה-י-קחנה-תבוא

And combining these vocables into words:

היפה, מי יוציאה; מה נענה יקחנה תבוא

We form two perfect Hebrew clauses, pronounced "Haiafa, mi yotsia; ma na'ne ykakhena tavo," meaning "The beautiful [Goddess], who will bring her out; what should we call out [in chorus] to entice her to come," which

every Hebrew speaking person today is able to read and understand! Should the combination of ten meaningless Japanese vocables into a complete Hebrew sentence – so well suited to persuade Goddess Amaterasu to leave her cave – be attributed to coincidence?

But not only the prayer was Hebrew. The term "Heavenly Koyane," which has no meaning in Japanese, as well as the words "*shamusho*," "Yamato," "*yashiro*," and "*yasaka*" – whose Japanese etymology is lost in antiquity – all seem to be of Hebrew origin.

The "Heavenly Koyane," as is evident from both his function in heaven and his being the ancestor of the priestly Nakatomi clan, must have been, undoubtedly, a Heavenly Priest; and indeed, the word "kahana" – which may have changed in the course of centuries to "koyane" – means "priest" in Aramaic.[9]

Shamusho, the administrative offices of a Shinto shrine, may have derived from the Hebrew word "shamashut," meaning "servicing." Every synagogue today has a "shamashut," which takes care of administrative functions.

The name "Yamato," which according to the *Nihon-Shoki* was given to the ancient land of the Japanese people at an early stage of the Creation,[10] has no clearly defined meaning in Japanese. In Hebrew-Aramaic, however, the two words "Ya-umato," pronounced "Ya-'mato," mean "God's people," the traditional epithet of the Hebrews in the Bible[11] (Ya = God; umato = people). And since lands usually bear the names of the people who dwell in them, it is quite possible that when the ancient Japanese first came to their islands, they used the name Yamato to designate part of their new territory. It is interesting to note here that the Japanese sometimes refer to their country as "The Kingdom of Sumera" (Sumera-Mikuni), which bears a striking resemblance to the name "Kingdom of Samaria" – the ancient homeland of the Ten Tribes of Israel!

The word "*yashiro*" is used to designate a Shinto shrine, and it is commonly construed as "a deity's dwelling place." The etymology of the word is unknown. In Hebrew, however, the two words "Ya-shore" mean "God dwells" (Ya = God; shore = dwells) – describing exactly the function of a *yashiro*.

The "*yasaka*" was a peculiar bead in the shape of a comma, used by the ancient Japanese as an amulet. According to the *Nihon-Shoki*, such beads

were given by Sun Goddess Amaterasu to her grandson, Ninigi-no-Mikoto, as symbols of authority, and Japanese emperors still use them as part of their regalia; yet the word has no meaning in Japanese. In Hebrew, though, the two words "Ya-sakha" mean "look to God" (Ya = God; sakha = look), implying "have trust in God;" and the peculiar comma form of the bead supports this interpretation: when hung from a string its shape represents the Hebrew Letter "Y" traditionally used to designate the word "Ya," meaning "God" in Hebrew.

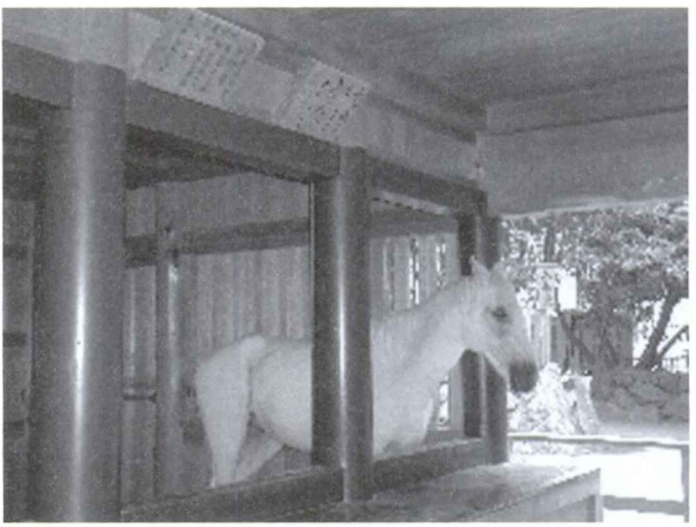
A *yasaka* bead

The element "Ya," implying "God," is found in many Hebrew words. The best known of these is perhaps the word "hallelu-ya" (halleluiah), meaning "praise the Lord." Should not the same "Ya," found in ancient Yamato words, point to the Hebrew origin of the Japanese "Way of God?"

The term "Way of God" (Kami-no-Michi) first appeared in the *Nihon-Shoki*, in the description of Emperor Yomei (p. 586–7), where it says that "The Emperor believed in the law of Buddha and reverenced the Way of God." It is generally believed that the term *"Kami-no-Michi"* was coined during the reign of Emperor Yomei to distinguish the native Shinto religion from Buddhism; and indeed, there is no way of knowing whether it was also used before that time. However, the "Way of God" is mentioned in the Book of Genesis (18:19), and other biblical books, as the religion of the ancient Hebrews! Could this amazing similarity be the result of coincidence?

Another interesting example of a Japanese tradition, which is also mentioned in the Bible, is the tradition of dedicating horses to the sun. According to the Bible, King Josiah (640–609 B.C.E.), who had abolished

those ancient traditions which were not mentioned in the Book of the Law, "took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entering of the house of the Lord;"[12] but the emperors of Japan still continue to offer horses to the sun (Goddess Amaterasu) – and these horses can be seen today at the entrance to the Grand Shrine of Ise.



A Sacred Horse
(In the stable of the Grand Shrine of Ise)

The sacred horses offered to the shrine by the Imperial Household are kept in this stable. At present there are two such horses in each of the main shrines, the outer and the inner. Three times each month (on the first, eleventh and twenty-first), the sacred horses are decked in beautiful robes and led before the main sanctuary[13].

Now we will return for a moment to the mythological being, called "Heavenly Koyane," who, according to both the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon-Shoki*, was the ancestor of the priestly Nakatomi clan. Earlier, we pointed out that the "Heavenly Koyane" must have been a Heavenly Priest; and it is very easy to show that this was not just a conjecture. For if we will write the Hebrew word "kohen," meaning "priest," from top to bottom, using Hebrew characters, as shown on this page, every Japanese-speaking person today would be able to read it. However, he would pronounce it "kohano." And since the character כ is sometimes pronounced "ya" in Japanese, it is quite possible that the Hebrew word "kohen" was pronounced "koyano"

by the ancient Japanese. In the course of time the pronunciation of this word may have changed into "koyane," and thus applied as an epithet for the "Heavenly Priest."

The word "kohen," written from top to bottom in Hebrew characters.

The last example of the Hebrew origin of some Japanese concepts inevitably raises the question of whether the ancient people of Yamato had been acquainted with the Hebrew alphabet. Indeed, the Hebrew characters found in both the *Katakana* and the *Hiragana* writings strongly support such a possibility, and a short discussion of the evolution of writing in Japan will clarify this point.

Chapter three

The Hebrew Writing in Japan

It is commonly accepted that writing was first introduced into Japan around 400 C.E., when a Korean scholar, by the name of Wani, was appointed to teach the heir apparent to read Chinese classics.[1] From this modest beginning, the Chinese ideographic writing gradually spread throughout the country, eventually to become adopted as the official writing system for the Japanese language. Thenceforth Japan was wide open to absorb all other aspects of Chinese civilization, and particularly Buddhism.

As mentioned earlier, Buddhism was introduced into Japan in 552 C.E. In that year, Emperor Kimmei received an image of Buddha, some flags and several volumes of sacred Buddhist writings from Korea. The gift was accompanied by a message saying that although the teachings of Buddha were difficult to understand and hard to explain, they were, nevertheless, a wonderful treasure of blessings which fulfilled every prayer. The Emperor was delighted with the gift, but was unable to decide whether to accept or reject the new religion. In trying to reach a decision, he consulted his ministers, and the matter developed into an acute political issue.

In those days there were two influential families vying for political dominance in Japan. One was the powerful Soga family, whose head was

the Great Minister of the Court, and the other was the Mononobe family, who were in charge of the imperial armories. The Soga family recommended that Buddhism be accepted by the court, on the grounds that all the countries on the continent had already adopted it. The Mononobe family, however, supported by the priestly Nakatomi family, reasoned that if the foreign religion were to be introduced into the country, it would incur the anger of the local Shinto gods, with disastrous consequences to the whole Japanese nation. After listening to the opposing views of his ministers, the Emperor decided to let the Soga family keep and worship the Buddha image.

A short time after the image of Buddha had been placed in the house of Soga, a plague broke out in the country, claiming many lives. The Mononobe and Nakatomi families, blaming the image of Buddha for the disaster, rushed to the palace and requested the Emperor's permission to destroy it. The Emperor gave his consent, and officials were dispatched to throw the image of Buddha into a canal and to set fire to the small temple where it had been worshiped.

Although defeated, the Soga family did not abandon their intention of adopting Buddhism. Thirty years after the burning of their small temple, they acquired another image of Buddha and erected a new temple in which to worship it. They also formed a small congregation of Buddhist followers, serviced by one priest and three nuns. However, as soon as the new temple was erected, another severe pestilence, which killed many people, spread through the country. The Mononobe and Nakatomi families again blamed the image of Buddha for the calamity, and with the Emperor's consent, they burned the new temple and dispersed the small Buddhist congregation. But shortly after this event, the Emperor and a large part of the population became afflicted with painful sores which took a long time to cure and caused much suffering. Interpreting the new disaster as divine punishment for destroying the image of Buddha, the Emperor gave permission to the Soga family to erect a new temple – and Buddhism became a recognized religion in Japan.

The political and religious struggle between the rival Soga and Mononobe clans continued to breed hatred until, at last, it exploded into a full-scale civil war. In 587 C.E., following a dispute over the succession to the throne, the Soga clan mobilized all its supporters, and in a swift military action, murdered the prince who aspired to become emperor and then turned

to attack their traditional foe, the Mononobe. In the battle that ensued, almost the entire Mononobe clan was wiped out and the victorious Sogas emerged to become the most powerful family of Japan. This new position of unchallenged strength gave them the power to appoint their favorite as successor to the throne, and they nominated one of their loyal princesses to reign as Empress Suiko. To assist the new empress in her administrative functions, they appointed Prince Mumayado to be Regent. Both Empress Suiko and Prince Mumayado were ardent Buddhists.

Prince Mumayado, better known as Shotoku Daishi, fought on the side of the Soga clan during the civil war, and was particularly interested in promoting Buddhism in Japan. One of his most important contributions to the imperial government was the promulgation of a written law known as "The Constitution of Seventeen Articles." Basically, the "seventeen articles" were more of a code of ethics than a constitution. Their purpose was to explain to the public that the welfare of the nation depended on a harmony between the people and the Emperor. This harmony, claimed the constitution, could be achieved by obedience to imperial authority and by reverence of Buddha.[2]

Indeed, at that time Buddhism was constantly attracting new adherents. The court favored Buddhism; scores of temples were built to house the images of Buddha; and students were sent to China to study Buddhist theology. As a result, while Buddhism became the center of Japan's cultural and religious life, the nation was estranged from its roots, and Shinto was gradually pushed into oblivion. In fact, Shinto was close to being completely obliterated, because the Soga family planned to usurp the throne and to do away with the Imperial Dynasty – the supreme symbol of Shinto authority. However, this scheme was never accomplished. In 645 C.E., during the reign of Empress Kogyoku, a group of zealots, led by Chief Shinto Priest Nakatomi no Kamako, overthrew the government of Prime Minister Soga, putting an end to his ambitions. In this uprising, the head of the Soga family set fire to his own residence, burning with it all the ancient books of Japan.

Immediately after the uprising, Empress Kogyoku abdicated, and her younger brother, who "honored the religion of Buddha and despised Shinto," ascended the throne to reign as Emperor Kotoku. Chief Shinto Priest Nakatomi no Kamako was appointed Minister of the Interior, and the new government – declaring the beginning of the Taikuwa Era – set out to introduce a series of political, social and religious reforms.

Since the leader of the uprising against the Soga clan – who introduced Buddhism into Japan – was Chief Shinto Priest Nakatomi no Kamako himself, it is reasonable to assume that the main purpose of the Taikuwa[3] reforms was to restore Shinto to its former position as the national religion of Japan. It is quite surprising, therefore, to find that most of the new laws so closely resemble ancient Hebrew traditions. The following table of comparison, in which the Taikuwa elements are printed in italics, illustrates the similarity. The Hebrew traditions are based on the biblical laws that appear in the different books of the Pentateuch.

Table of Comparison (Page numbers refer to the *Nihon-Shoki*, Vol. 2)
The Taikuwa Era began on the first day of the seventh month (p. 198). The first day of the seventh month is the Hebrew New Year, called "a holy convocation" in the Bible (Lev. 23:24).
On the fourteenth day of the seventh month, the leaders of the Taikuwa Government sent envoys to bring offerings to Shinto gods (p. 199). On the fourteenth day of the seventh month, in the evening, begins the Hebrew feast of Tabernacles, in which offerings have to be brought to the temple (Lev. 23:34–36).
The agriculture land of the country was to be redistributed to the people once every six years (p. 208, note). The Bible says: "Six years thou shalt sow thy field...but in the seventh year shall be a Sabbath of rest unto the land" (Lev. 25:3–4). The Japanese may have used the seventh year for the redistribution of land.
If slaves of two houses marry, the children of this marriage shall belong to the mother (p. 202). According to the Bible, if a master gives a wife to one of his slaves, and the wife bears children, the children belong to the mother; both mother and her children remain with the master if the slave is set free (Ex. 21:4).
A decree was issued saying that "From this time forward the sale of land is not allowed" (p. 205). The Bible says: "The land shall not be sold forever" (Lev. 25:23).

Table of Comparison (Continued)
Land was to be distributed to the people according to the size of their families (p. 208, note). The Bible says: "To many thou shalt give the more inheritance, and to few thou shalt give the less inheritance" (Num. 26:54); "inheritance" means "land" here.
People should not cut their hair and stab themselves when mourning over their dead relatives (p. 220). According to the Bible, "Thou shalt not make baldness upon their head...nor make any cuttings in their flesh" (Lev. 21:5), when mourning over their dead relatives. This biblical law applies mainly to priests.
"*There are many cases of persons who, having seen, say that they have not seen, or who, having not seen, say that they have seen, or who, having heard, say that they have not heard, or who, having not heard say that they have heard, being deliberate liars, and devoid of truth in words and in sight*" (p. 220); *such behavior is unbecoming.* The Bible says: "Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another" (Lev. 19:11).
Husbands should not accuse their wives of adultery if they cannot prove their case with "...let us say, three credible witnesses" (p. 221). In ancient Israel, adultery was punishable by death, therefore, "At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses," were people put to death (Deut. 17:6).
If a man left his horse in charge of a farmer, and the farmer falsely claimed that the horse had died, or had been stolen – he could often clear himself of all responsibility by doing purgation; the "reform" suggests that a village elder be a witness when handing the horse for stabling (pp. 222–23). According to the Bible, "If a man deliver unto his neighbor an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast, to keep; and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man seeing it [no witness]: Then shall an oath of the Lord [purgation] be between them both" (Ex. 22:10–11).

Table of Comparison (Continued)
One regulation says that "during the agricultural months [harvest], let every one apply himself early to the cultivation of the rice-land. At such time let them not eat dainty food (fish) nor drink sake (rice wine) (p. 223). This regulation is not mentioned in the Bible; however, according to an ancient Hebrew tradition, people should abstain from participating in any festive activity in the seven weeks of harvest. "Begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginist to put the sickle to the corn" (Deut. 16:9).
An edict was promulgated saying that "For each ward in the capital let there be appointed one alderman, and for four wards one chief alderman, who shall be charged with the superintendence of the population and the examination of criminal matters" (p. 207). This edict is definitely out of place here, because at that time (646 C.E.) Japan did not have a permanent capital which could be divided into wards. The first capital of Japan, Nara, was built in 710. However, one passage in the Bible says: "Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates [of the cities]...and they shall judge the people with just judgment" (Deut. 16:18).
One edict says: "Again, there are cases when people have applied to others for the loan of pots to boil their rice, and the pots have knocked against something and have been upset. Upon this the owner of the pot compels purgation to be made (p. 222), *and this is unbecoming.* According to the Bible, "if a man borrows something of his neighbor, and it be hurt, or die...he shall surely make it good" (Ex. 22:14).
According to one edict, "Those who convert property [of others] to their own use shall be mulcted in double its value" (p. 213). According to the Bible: "For all manner of trespass...or for any manner of lost thing, which another challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall come before the judges; and whom the judges shall condemn, he shall pay double unto his neighbor" (Ex. 22:9).

The above Table of Comparison contains most of the reformed laws that

were promulgated during the Taikuwa Era. And since it is practically impossible to attribute the close similarity between the Hebrew and Japanese laws to coincidence, it is reasonable to assume that the Shinto leaders of that epoch were in possession of the ancient Hebrew writings – which were always written in Hebrew. Was the Taikuwa reform an attempt to reinstate the ancient Hebrew "Way of God" in Japan?

If the initiators of the Taikuwa reform had any hope of abolishing Buddhism in Japan – and "Tikva" means "Hope" in Hebrew – it was too late. Emperor Kotoku, who reigned during the Taikuwa Era, "despised the Way of Gods,"[4] and the rest of the population had become so accustomed to Buddhism, that it was there to stay. In effect, Buddhism continued to flourish, and Japan continued to absorb everything that came from China; both Buddhism and Chinese influence reached their peak during the Nara period.

Nara, built according to Chinese town planning principles, was the capital of Japan from 710 to 794, and that period was marked by two important events in the history of Japan: the compilation of the history of Yamato in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon-Shoki* books, and the casting of a three-storey high (16 m) bronze statue of Buddha. The events connected with this gigantic statue invite special attention.

In 735 C.E., during the reign of Emperor Shomu, an epidemic of smallpox broke out in Japan, threatening to affect a large part of the population. The Emperor understood the disaster to be a result of his country not being adequately protected by religious symbols. As a result, he decided to erect a gigantic statue of Buddha in Nara. However, fearing that the Shinto priesthood would oppose his idea, he took the precaution of dispatching the Buddhist monk Gyogi to the Ise shrine, to inquire about the attitude of the local gods to his project. And when Gyogi reported that according to an oracle received at Ise, Sun Goddess Amaterasu favored the project – craftsmen began to cast the colossal bronze statue of Buddha.

After several years of hard work and many drawbacks, the polished and gilded bronze statue of Buddha was ready to be presented to the public, and the occasion was marked by an impressive ceremony. All the dignitaries of Japan, many guests from abroad, and ten thousand Buddhist monks participated in the stately celebration in which the Emperor prayed for world peace and declared himself to be a loyal servant of Buddha; and Buddhism soared to new heights.

In the course of time, Nara became so populated with Buddhist monks that, in the end, they became the real rulers of the city. They raised their own armies, acquired large tracts of tax-free land, meddled in politics, and disrupted the orderly life of the court. Eventually, their interventions reached such proportions that Emperor Kammu, the fiftieth emperor of Japan, decided to transfer the capital to a new location. In 794, the capital of Japan was removed to the city of Heian-Kyo, known today as Kyoto.

Like Nara, Heian-Kyo was also built according to Chinese town planning principles. Surrounded by wooded hills, and laid out symmetrically on both sides of a wide avenue, with the emperor's palace at the extreme north of the city, and an imposing gate-like structure, called Rashomon, at the extreme south, the new capital was really a "heian-kyo" – city of peace and tranquility.

From a social and cultural point of view, life in the new capital was actually a direct continuation of the Nara period. The only difference was, perhaps, that being free from the menacing influence of the militant Buddhist monks, noblemen were able to devote more time to the writing of poems, to the cultivation of social etiquette, and to the study of Chinese literature. Indeed, in those days a person's standing in the aristocratic society of Heian-Kyo was measured mainly by his ability to write an impressive poem, to use a proper perfume at a social gathering, or to quote a passage from a Chinese book.

Until the middle of the ninth century, Japan was totally absorbed in Chinese culture. Then it gradually began to free itself from the influence of China and to develop its own cultural resources. As a result, toward the end of the ninth century, two new syllabic alphabets were invented, the *Katakana* and the *Hiragana*, which were much better suited for writing the Japanese language than the borrowed Chinese ideographs. The two native scripts, which were much easier to learn than the Chinese characters, aroused great interest among the more educated circles of the population, and many of them tried their hand at writing prose or poetry, yielding a wealth of literary works of great merit.

No one knows precisely who invented the *Katakana* and *Hiragana* syllabaries, or why the ancient Japanese had to invent two new scripts. It is generally agreed that the two so-called "native writings" are, in effect, simplifications of Chinese ideographs. However, the fact that such a large proportion of the *Katakana* and *Hiragana* characters resembles the letters of

the Hebrew alphabet is so amazing, that it is hard to accept their derivation from any other source, but Hebrew. And there are several clues hinting at the possibility that the ancient Japanese had been acquainted with Hebrew writing long before they decided to adopt the Chinese ideographs. But before presenting these clues, a few general comments on the evolution of Hebrew writing will be helpful.

The ancient Hebrew letters belong to a group of North Semitic writings which, together with Phoenician and Aramaic, are considered to be among the earliest alphabetical writings. The old characters were used by the Hebrews from about 1000 B.C.E. until the middle of the sixth century B.C.E.. Then the writing was gradually modernized, and around the first century B.C.E. it evolved into the so-called square writing which, excluding some insignificant changes, is used by the Hebrews up to the present day. In addition to the square script, which is used today only for writing the Torah[5] on parchment, Hebrew has a cursive writing used for ordinary correspondence.

Written from right to left, the Hebrew alphabet consists of twenty-two letters, all of them consonants. Instead of vowels, dots and dashes are used as vocalic punctuation marks. Without going into a detailed study of these marks, we will try to illustrate their use by applying some of them to the letter *R*.

From among the several systems of vocalic punctuation marks used by the Hebrews in the past, the so-called Babylonian and Tiberian systems were the most important. In the Babylonian system, a horizontal dash over a letter was pronounced 'a'; thus R was read 'Ra.' In the same system, a vertical stroke over a letter was pronounced 'u'; thus R became 'Ru.' In a similar way, in the Tiberian system of vocalic punctuation, a dot marked to the left of a letter was pronounced 'o'; and R became 'Ro.' Likewise, placing a dot within some letters, changed them from voiceless to voiced. Thus, for example, 'F' became 'P.'

This short introduction to the Hebrew alphabet and its vocalic punctuation marks is sufficient to enable an examination of the origin of the *Katakana* and *Hiragana* from a new point of view. The table on the next page shows some stages in the evolution of the Hebrew writing, while the table on the page following that presents some comparisons between Hebrew and Japanese characters. For the sake of simplicity, the compared characters have been divided into three groups:

GROUP A, as can be clearly seen, consists of those Japanese characters that are almost identical with their Hebrew counterparts. The only difference is that whereas the Hebrew letters are consonants, the Japanese characters are syllables.

GROUP B shows how the vocalic punctuation marks have been used by the Japanese in order to transform some Hebrew consonants into *Katakana* and *Hiragana* syllabic letters. A dash over the Hebrew letter *r* transforms it into the *Katakana* character 'ra'; and a dash across the Hebrew cursive letter *a,* which is normally used as a glottal stop, transforms it into the *Hiragana* sound 'a.'

The Hebrew Alphabet
(read from right to left)

1. Hebrew-Phoenician: about 8th century B.C.E.
2. Hebrew-Aramaic: 6th–4th centuries B.C.E.
3. Dead Sea Scrolls: about 1st century B.C.E.
4. Modern print letters
5. Modern cursive letters

Likewise, a dash over the Hebrew letter *w* transforms it into a *u*, exactly as had been done when the ancient Hebrews used the Babylonian system of vocalic punctuation.

GROUP C contains some Japanese characters which, for an unknown reason, are written at a different inclination than their Hebrew counterparts. Some are turned sideways, while others are written as though reflected in a mirror.

Although the comparisons presented in the three groups should be sufficient to show that such a close similarity between so many Hebrew

and Japanese characters could not be attributed to coincidence, we will, nevertheless, present additional evidence to show that the ancient Japanese had been acquainted with the Hebrew alphabet from the earliest times of their history.

Table of Comparison Between Japanese and Hebrew Characters

GROUP A

	k	k	q	th	f	l	lu
H	コ	ケ	ア	人	フ	レ	ル
J	コ	ク	カ	ト	フ	レ	ル
	ko	ku	ka	to	fu	re	ru

	n	ts	s	h	w	'	ri
H	ノ	ネ	ワ	ה	ヿ	ひ	リ
J	ノ	そ	サ	ハ	ワ	ひ	リ
	no	so	sa	ha	wa	hi	ri

GROUP B

	r	n	a	w	z	f	th
H	フ	ノ	ね	フ	ノ	フ	ナ
J	ラ	ナ	あ	ウ	ソ	プ	た
	ra	na	a	u	so	pu	ta

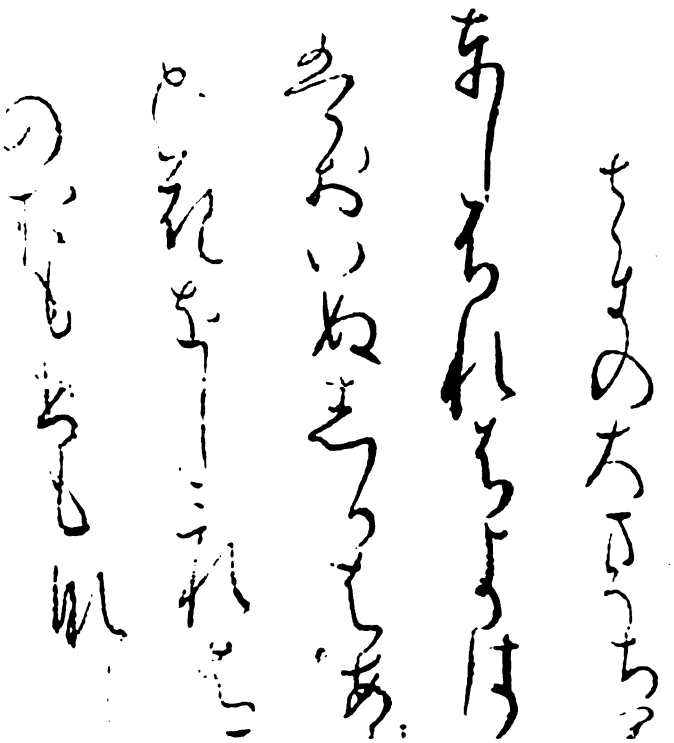
GROUP C

	'	ts	sh	m	m	n	i
H	ソ	ス	ベ	ツ	サ	ソ	ス
J	ヒ	ス	シ	ミ	モ	ん	イ
	hi	su	shi	mi	mo	n	i

H—Hebrew J—Japanese

One of the mysteries of the *Katakana* and *Hiragana* is the origin of their names. It is customary to explain that "kata kana" means "one sided kana,"

because it originated from "one side" of certain Chinese characters, and that "hira gana" (actually "hira kana") means "simple kana." However, neither explanation describes the *kana* writings properly: The *Katakana* does not always represent "side" sections of Chinese characters, and the *Hiragana* is not so "simple." On the other hand, it is quite possible that "kata kana" is a slight corruption of the Hebrew expression "ktav Kanaan," meaning "writing of Canaan,"[6] and "hira kana" is a slight corruption of the Hebrew-Aramaic expression "eira ktav Kanaan," which was later shortened to "eira kana," meaning "intertwined kana," and that *Hiragana* is more "intertwined" than "simple" can be seen in the illustration below.



Twelfth century *Hiragana* writing

Indirect evidence of the possibility that the Japanese were in possession of writing at a time when they were still considered illiterate comes from the *Nihon-Shoki*. In book 16, we find that Emperor Muretsu, who reigned at the beginning of the sixth century, "was fond of criminal law, and he was well versed in the statutes;"[7] and as we know, both laws and statutes are usually kept in a written form.

Another clue which points to the possibility that the ancient Japanese had been acquainted with the Hebrew writing comes from the mysterious importance that Japanese tradition attributes to the number 17. At this point, however, we must return for a moment to the discussion of the Hebrew alphabet.

According to an old Hebrew tradition, each of the twenty-two letters of the alphabet has a numerical value. And since, according to the same tradition, Hebrew letters are of divine origin, it follows that certain combinations of numbers possess prophetic significance. Thus, for instance, number 18 indicates "longevity," because the numerical value of the two letters used to spell the Hebrew word *hi*, meaning "being alive," is 18 (h=8; i=10). Similarly, number 17 portends "a good omen," because the numerical value of the three letters of the Hebrew word *tov*, meaning "good," is 17 (t=9; o=6; v=2).

The Japanese also seem to have a tradition that number 17 should portend a kind of "good omen," but they use this number in the composition of *haiku* poems only. According to the rules of Japanese prosody, a *haiku* poem should describe a scene of nature, a thought, or an emotion, in 17 syllables. The reason for this peculiar tradition is lost in antiquity, but the repeated use of "seventeen articles" in ancient constitutions indicates that it was not coincidental. Hence, it is reasonable to assume that there was a time when the Japanese knew of the particular significance of number 17, and that time might have been when they used the Hebrew alphabet.

If my assumption that the ancient Japanese were acquainted with the Hebrew alphabet is correct, the unavoidable question is why then did they have to adopt Chinese ideographic writing?

I have mentioned that the ancient Hebrews considered their alphabet to be sacred, so it is quite possible that only priests were initiated into the secret art of writing. Remember that according to the Bible, the cornerstone of Jewish law – the Ten Commandments – was written on two tablets of stone, "And the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tablets."[8] These tablets were so venerated by the ancient Hebrews that they were kept in the most holy section of the Temple, into which the High Priest was allowed to enter only once a year. And according to Josephus Flavius, the Jewish historian who lived in the first century of our era, the Ten Commandments written on the tablets were considered so sacred that even priests were not allowed to quote them.

This attitude of the ancient Hebrews toward their sacred writings, and the similar attitude of the Japanese toward the mirror with the Hebrew inscription on it meaning the Yassaka bead, which stands for the Hebrew letter *Ya* meaning God, perhaps explains some events connected with the evolution of writing in Japan. It is quite possible that during all those years that the Japanese were considered illiterate, the Shinto priests knew of the existence of Hebrew writing, but guarded it as a divine treasure. However, when they eventually realized that one reason why Buddhism managed to establish itself in the country was the introduction of Chinese script, they decided to reveal the Hebrew writing, and adopt it for secular use. This assumption is incapable of proof either way. But judging by a somewhat similar story related in the Bible, such an event could really have happened.

During the reign of the Hebrew King Josiah,[9] an ancient book of the law was accidentally discovered in the Temple, hidden there for three hundred and fifty years. Neither the king nor the High Priest knew of the existence of the book, and it was only after reading it that the king learned about the feast of Passover, which had not been celebrated for over five hundred years. It is quite possible that something similar to the finding of the ancient Hebrew book in the Temple of Jerusalem took place in Japan during the Nara and the Heian periods. A discovery of some ancient documents, perhaps a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures, may have inspired a feeling of national pride, resulting in an urge to return to ancient traditions. Consequently, the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon-Shoki* had been written with an intent on emphasizing the divine origin of the Japanese Imperial Dynasty, while the Hebrew alphabet was introduced in order to compete with the Chinese writing.

If that was indeed the intent of the ancient Shinto priests, their efforts may have been partially successful. Partially, because the *Katakana* and *Hiragana* writings, though in use today, did not replace the Chinese ideographs, and neither the *Kojiki* nor the *Nihon-Shoki* was able to present enough historical evidence to tell future generations about the origins of the Japanese nation.

But if the origin of the Japanese is Hebrew, how did they come to settle in the islands of Japan?

Chapter four

Tracing Historical Footprints

Most scholars agree that the people of Yamato came to the islands of Japan sometime between the first and third centuries of the Common Era, which coincides with the time when the Ten Tribes of Israel became "lost." But if the people of Yamato are directly descended from the Ten Tribes of Israel, the natural question that follows is where had they been during the eight or nine hundred years separating the fall of the Kingdom of Samaria in Israel and the rise of the Kingdom of Sumera in Japan?

There is no direct evidence of the whereabouts of the Ten Tribes of Israel before they reached the islands of Japan. But perhaps their story can be reconstructed by using indirect evidence. Before doing so though, I shall digress briefly to the ancient history of the Hebrews.

The national history of the Hebrews begins in 1250 B.C.E., when the twelve tribes of Israel, led by Moses, left Egypt and set out on a long journey to return to the land that God had promised to give to their ancestors – the land of Canaan. At the end of the journey, which lasted forty years, the children of Israel settled in the Promised Land and established there a federation of Hebrew tribes. The capital of the federation was at Shiloh, about thirty kilometers north of Jerusalem, and there the tribes would

come to celebrate their annual feasts, to settle their disputes, or to elect a "judge" to lead them in a war.

After two and a half centuries of being led by judges, the Hebrews decided that they could much better defend themselves against the menacing attacks of the neighboring nations by forming a kingdom. Consequently, "all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel (the prophet) unto Ramah, and said unto him...now make us a king to judge us like all the nations,"[1] and Samuel anointed Saul to be the first king of Israel.

Most of Saul's years as king were spent in wars. He was so busy fighting "against Moab, and against the children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines," that he had no time to change the internal organization of the Hebrews. During his reign, the tribal leaders continued to exercise their powers within the framework of the tribes, while he kept bravely leading his army against the enemies of Israel. However, in one of the bitter encounters with the Philistines, at the close of the eleventh century B.C.E., Saul succumbed. Wounded in battle and refusing to be captured by the Philistines, the first king of the Hebrews fell upon his sword and died.

After King Saul's death, his son, Eshbaal, succeeded to the throne, but he did not reign for long. First, part of the kingdom was taken away from him by a Hebrew hero named David, who had been anointed king of the town of Hebron, and then, in about 1010 B.C.E., "all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron; and King David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord and they anointed David king over Israel."[2]

Endowed with a rare talent for leadership, the new Hebrew king understood that his first task should be to unite the twelve tribes of Israel under a single banner. Consequently, David captured the city of Jerusalem from the Jebusites, turned it into a civil and religious center for the country, and then launched his attacks against those nations which had been disturbing Israel's peace. He smote the Philistines, subdued Moab, conquered Edom, and put his garrisons in Syria. And so, gradually, the small Hebrew kingdom grew into an empire that extended from the banks of the Euphrates to the borders of Egypt.

King David is considered the founder of the Hebrew state, and the dynasty that he established remained in power for more than four hundred years. "And the days that David reigned over Israel were forty years:

seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem."[3] At the end of his reign, shortly before his death, David abdicated, and his son Solomon was anointed king over Israel.

Solomon, who had inherited from his father a strong and prosperous empire, reigned from 970 to 931 B.C.E.. But unlike his father, who had spent most of his life fighting Israel's enemies, Solomon preferred to involve himself with politics, international trade, religion and poetry. He established friendly relations with all his neighbors, built a fleet of ships that sailed to distant lands, constructed a magnificent temple in Jerusalem and composed more than four thousand poems and proverbs. Jerusalem became an important international center: "And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom."[4]

But the glory of the Hebrew empire did not last long. After Solomon's death, just when his son, Rehoboam, ascended the throne, the ten tribes of Israel seceded from the Hebrew commonwealth and formed their own kingdom. And on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, the new kingdom declared its independence. Thus, in 931 B.C.E. there were two Hebrew kingdoms: the kingdom of Judah, with its capital in Jerusalem, and the kingdom of Israel, with its capital in Shechem.

The kingdom of Israel, whose capital later became the city of Samaria, existed for a little more than two hundred years. Then, in 721 B.C.E., "the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes." The fate of the kingdom of Israel was sealed. Exiled from their homeland, and banished to faraway lands, the people of Samaria mysteriously vanished somewhere in the East, and in the course of time became known as the "Ten Lost Tribes of Israel." Sargon II (721–705 B.C.E.), the Assyrian king who was responsible for the exile of the people of Samaria, relates the story as follows:

> I Sargon, the Great King, the Mighty King who crushed countries like earthen pots, who subdued cities from the Valley of Egypt; the Wide Westland, the land of the Hittites, and the land of the distant Medes where the sun is rising...at the beginning of my government I besieged and conquered the city of Samaria; the 27,290 inhabitants who were living in it I led into captivity, and

> people from all the countries whom my hands had made prisoners I caused to dwell there[5].

Sargon did not specify in his annals to which countries he had exiled the people of Samaria, and it is most unlikely that he told the people of Judah – who had not been deported – the destination of the exiles. How then did the compilers of the Bible know that the people of Samaria had been placed "in Halah and in Habor...and in the cities of the Medes," as the Book of Kings tells us? And how was it established that the Ten Tribes of Israel – identical with the people of Samaria – had disappeared?

The truth is that nothing has ever been established about the "loss" of the Ten Tribes. According to popular conjecture, after their banishment to the distant lands, "the people of the northern kingdom (Samaria) and their kings with them disappeared, were absorbed into the population of these foreign lands, and never emerged again in history."[6] But this is just a conjecture, for no evidence as to either the absorption of the Ten Tribes into the populations of the foreign lands, or to the time that they became lost, has ever been presented. Moreover, a close examination of the Bible, and other ancient writings, reveals that the Ten Tribes of Israel continued to maintain their national unity for more than eight hundred years after the exile! How, if so, did they become "lost?"

According to the Book of Chronicles,[7] "the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul King of Assyria, and the spirit of Tilgath-Pilneser King of Assyria, and he carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites (two Hebrew tribes), and the half tribe of Manasseh, and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and the river Gozan, unto this day." And since the Book of Chronicles is believed to have been written in about 400 B.C.E.,[8] the statement "unto this day" indicates that 320 years after the destruction of the kingdom of Samaria, some of the exiled Hebrew tribes who lived in the region of "Halah, and Habor, and Hara and the river of Gozan," still maintained their tribal structure.

But this was not the last time that ancient writers and historians brought information about the existence of the ten tribes of Israel. At the end of the first century of our era – more than eight hundred years after the exile of the people of Samaria – the Hebrew historian Josephus Flavius wrote in his book *Antiquities of the Jews* that "the ten tribes are

beyond Euphrates until now, and are an immense multitude, and not to be estimated by numbers."[9]

Josephus Flavius does not tell us the exact location of the place which he calls "beyond Euphrates;" another book, however, known as Esdras II, which was also written at the end of the first century of our era, gives us a closer indication as to the whereabouts of the Ten Tribes.

Although Esdras II is known mainly as a book of visions and revelations, it contains, nevertheless, important historical information. Thus, for example, when God explains to Ezra one of His visions, He says:

> Then you saw (a man) collecting a different company, a peaceful one. They are the ten tribes which were taken off into exile in the time of King Hoshea, whom Shalmaneser king of Assyria took prisoner. He deported them beyond the River and they were taken away into a strange country. But then they resolved to leave the country populated by Gentiles and go to a distant land never yet inhabited by man, and there at last to be obedient to their laws, which in their own country they had failed to keep. As they passed through the narrow passages of the Euphrates, the most High performed miracles for them, stopping up the channels of the river until they had crossed over. Their journey through that region, which is called Arzareth, was long, and took a year and a half. They have lived there ever since, until this final age. Now they are on their way back, and once more the Most High will stop the channels of the river to let them cross (II Esdras, 13:39–47).[10]

This passage gives us a more or less clear indication of both the direction in which the Ten Tribes traveled, and the distance they had to traverse on their journey from Assyria to the land "never yet inhabited by man."

First, about the direction. According to the author of Esdras II, the Ten Tribes journeyed through a region called Arzareth, which many scholars believe to be a corruption of the two Hebrew words "arets-aheret," simply meaning "another land." However, this conjecture does not indicate anything, for it is known that exiled Hebrews were exiled to "another land." On the other hand, it is quite possible that Arzareth is a corruption of the

name Hazarajat, a mountainous area in central Afghanistan, not far from Habor and the river of Gozan, which, according to the Bible, were inhabited by the Ten Tribes of Israel. The river of Gozan might well be the Ghazni, which flows through the town of Ghazni, situated about 120 kilometers southwest of Kabul; and Habor (pronounced Khabor) is the Khyber area, about two hundred kilometers east of Kabul.

That Afghanistan was inhabited by Hebrew tribes in the remote past can be corroborated, perhaps, by the fact that even today there are several Afghan tribes who claim to be the descendants of the Hebrews who were exiled by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C.E. H.W. Bellew, in his book *Journal of a Political Mission to Afghanistan in 1857*, says that the Afghans, as well as the Pathan tribes, style themselves Bani-Israil, meaning "Children of Israel," and trace their descent in a direct line from Saul the Benjamite, king of Israel.[11] And although they can adduce no authentic evidence in support of their claim, their own books, describing their origin and early history, lay such stress on their wars with the biblical Philistines and Amalekites, and present such minute details of the Ark of the Covenant, that only descendants of Hebrews, well acquainted with the Bible, could set forth.[12] It may be interesting to point out here that most of the Afghan tribes are Moslems today. And it is quite possible that they began styling themselves "Afghans" after adopting Islam: for "afkhan," in Aramaic means "one who has changed (religion)."

Having found some descendants of Hebrew tribes in Afghanistan, it should be relatively easy for us to identify the "distant land never yet inhabited by man," to which, according to Esdras II, the Ten Tribes had to journey one and a half years. Using the biblical scale, which says that it took a group of Hebrews four months to travel from Babylon to Jerusalem,[13] a journey of one and a half years east, at about the same pace, should have brought the Ten Tribes to the Issyk-kul basin of ancient Halah (pronounced Khalakh). And indeed, Halah together with Habor and Gozan, is mentioned in the Bible as being the abode of the exiled Hebrew tribes.[14]

Judging by the information we do have, the Ten Tribes must have lived in the area of Halah for about eight hundred years.[15] There, through many centuries of intermarriage with such Mongoloid tribes as Khalkhas,[16] Uighurs, Uzbeks and Turkmen, who lived in their vicinity, they gradually acquired Mongolian features. Yet in spite of their becoming externally "Mongolian" looking, they seem to have continued to preserve their na-

tional identity and to send from time to time greetings to their ancient homeland.

Communication by descendants of the exiled Ten Tribes with their ancient kingdom, though not very frequent, must have been maintained as long as they dwelt in the regions of Halah and Habor. There, being actually in control of the caravan route from China to the Mediterranean, known as the Silk Road, they could easily exchange information with their brethren in Judah. A few words about the Silk Road will clarify the method of this communication.

The Silk Road, opened for trade in the second century B.C.E., was the main artery through which caravans carrying silk from China reached the Mediterranean. Up to twelve caravans a year left Loyang, in east central China, and went west across the deserts. From An-Hsi, the Silk Road split so as to circumvent the Takla Makan Desert: the "South Road" went westwards through Yarkand and the Khyber Pass, and the "North Road," went westwards through Kashgar and Khalakh. These two roads met again in Mashhad in Iran, and from there via Hamadan continued to the Mediterranean. Sometimes caravans started their journey on the Mediterranean coast eastwards through Iran and northern Afghanistan to a place called "The Stone Tower" (Tash-Kurgan) in the Pamir Mountains, and there exchanged goods with caravans from China. All caravans had to pass through the Hebrew "territories" of either Halah or Habor (Khalakh and Khyber), and thus could carry messages from the Ten Tribes to their brethren in Judah. That was apparently how Josephus Flavius knew, at the end of the first century of our era, that the Ten Tribes were "an immense multitude" somewhere beyond the Euphrates.

From this evidence presented by Josephus Flavius – and the author of Esdras II – it is a reasonable surmise that communication between the Ten Tribes of Israel and the Hebrews in Judah lasted at least until the first century of our era. Then, perhaps at the beginning of the second century of our era, when the Ten Tribes left their abode in central Asia and immigrated into the islands of Japan, their communication with the people of Judah was interrupted, and they were considered "lost."

But why, after dwelling for eight hundred years in central Asia, did the Ten Tribes of Israel decide to uproot themselves and immigrate to the islands of Japan?

No clue has been found as to why they decided to leave central Asia.

However, since it is known that devastating climatic changes took place in the Takla Makan Desert sometime between the first and third century C.E., perhaps there were similar changes in other areas of central Asia, forcing people to abandon their towns and villages and seek refuge in other lands; among such people may have been the Ten Tribes of Israel.

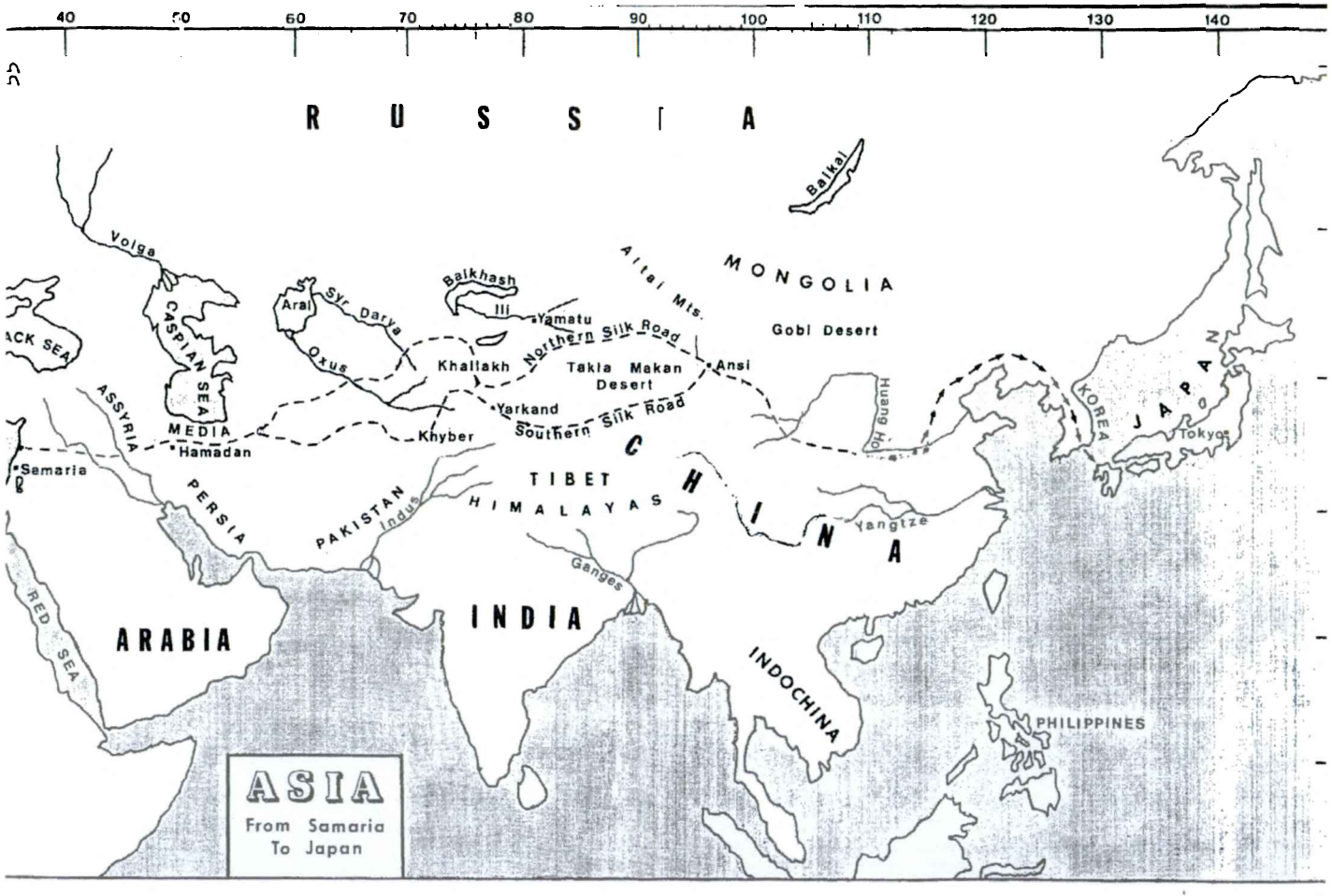
The havoc wrought by climatic changes among the people of Takla Makan was preserved in the memory of neighboring communities as a manifestation of divine wrath. According to Hedin, people living on the fringes of the Takla Makan Desert kept alive legends about a town buried in the sands, and a heathen race which had lived many hundreds of years earlier in the desert. Because that race refused to adopt Islam, says one legend, holy imams invoked God's vengeance upon their country, "and it rained sand for several days, until the country, and all its inhabitants, and all their cities were buried under it."[17] Hedin himself saw the ruins of villages that formerly stood on the shores of a lake, and the dry poplars that marked the banks of ancient rivers. Another scholar, Huntington, who explored some ruins in the Takla Makan Desert, recorded that "the ruins lie in the midst of a great expanse of dead vegetation, extending a dozen miles to the east, and an unknown distance in other directions. I traversed beds of dead reeds and poplars for six miles south of Dandan-Uilik (about 150 km northeast of Khotan), and could see dead trees extending indefinitely to the north and west."[18] Yet another scholar, Sir Aurel Stein, who explored the Lop-Nor ruins of eastern Takla Makan, in addition to describing abandoned villages, dead forests and bridges that still stretch from bank to bank of dried up rivers, writes, "The rich harvest of beads, made of glass, paste, or stone, and often of brilliant colors, pointed to the fair sex having been amply represented at this station, from which life and all its pleasures had departed so long ago. But still more striking, perhaps, was the profusion of Chinese copper coins, square-holed, and all without exception belonging to the types which were current during the earlier and later Han Dynasties."[19]

Now we can try to form a clear picture of the climatic disaster that befell the people of Takla Makan, and consider its consequences. Evidently, the change in climate was not abrupt. It must have begun sometime during the Han Dynasty in China (200 B.C.E.–200 C.E.), when lakes began to dry up gradually, rivers stopped flowing and orchards withered; and the people, being without water, were eventually forced to flee their homes and

to seek refuge in other lands. Many of them, maybe even some Hebrew tribes, went eastwards. A small group of these Hebrews, later known as "Chinese Jews," reached Kaifeng during the Han Dynasty,[20] and remained there. Another group, apparently the main body, continued its journey, and going northeast, reached Korea.[21]

Having reached Korea, where they learned about the "empty islands" in the east, the Hebrew refugees from the desolate Takla Makan[22] might have sent an expedition to examine the place and see whether it was fit for settlement. If the expedition brought back good tidings about the land and the few Ainus who dwelt there, then the leaders of the Hebrews probably decided to occupy the islands and establish their new home there.

However, when large numbers of Hebrews landed on the islands, they must have encountered a strong opposition from the Ainus, resulting, most likely, in armed clashes. To overcome this resistance, the newcomers, while maintaining a strong bridgehead on the islands, sent envoys to the mainland to bring reinforcements. These reinforcements, naturally, were mobilized from among the Hebrew tribes. Thus, within a relatively short time, Hebrews from central Asia began immigrating into the islands of Japan, transforming them into the land of Yamato. In the course of years, the contact of these Hebrews with their brethren in Judah was completely cut off – and they were considered lost forever.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Gobi Desert
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Balkhash
Yamatu
Northern Silk Road
Oxus
Khallakh
Takla Makan Desert
Ansi
Yarkand
Southern Silk Road
Khyber
CASPIAN SEA
ASSYRIA
MEDIA
Hamadan
Semaria
PERSIA
PAKISTAN
Indus
TIBET
HIMALAYAS
CHINA
Yangtze
Ganges
Huang Ho
KOREA
JAPAN
Tokyo
ARABIA
RED SEA
INDIA
INDOCHINA
PHILIPPINES
ASIA
From Samaria
To Japan

Chapter five

Some Aspects of Language

Language has always been a prime source of self-identification for mankind. Every community, however large or small, shows great pride in its language; and every language, however rich or poor, contains traces in its vocabulary linking it to many former generations. Hence, efforts to discover historical affinities between nations often begin with an attempt to find out what language they spoke in the past.

Attempts to use language as a tool for interpreting the significance of historical events are not new. Ancient Hebrew scholars, for example, believing that speech was God's gift to mankind and that every word had divine implications, used language as a means to explain events going as far back as the Creation. According to their creed, when Adam was created he was able to speak and to give names to "every beast of the field." Wondering, however, why the human race had not continued speaking the "Adamic" language, they used an entymological approach to explain that since "balel" means "to confound" in Hebrew, "Babel" (Babylon) must have been the place where the first language of mankind had been confounded. According to the Book of Genesis, originally "the whole earth was of one language and of one speech." But after the great confusion in Babel, mankind was scattered upon the face of the earth, and each nation, speaking its own

language, settled in its own land. Today the descendents of those nations speak well over three thousand languages.

Having found a way to account for the great diversity of languages, the ancient Hebrews went a step further, and using what seems to be a system of "comparative linguistics," they classified nations according to the languages they spoke. Thus, for example, they classified Javan and Madai (Greeks and Medians) as belonging to the Japhethic family of nations; Cush and Mizraim (Ethiopians and Egyptians) as belonging to the Hamitic family of nations, while Aram and Asshur (Arameans and Assyrians) were grouped in the Semitic family of nations: "Every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations."[1] Today we too use comparative linguistics to group nations according to the languages they speak; but, of course, we use much more refined scientific methods than the ancient Hebrews did.

Scholars have always had a feeling that many of the world's languages developed from a single source, but a real scientific approach to the study of language did not take place until 1786. In that year, Sir William Jones, a British scholar, delivered his presidential address to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, in which he pointed out that the affinity of Sanskrit, the classical language of India, to Latin and Greek was "so strong indeed, that no philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists..."[2]

This epoch-making discovery was the spark that kindled the imagination of scholars, and within a few decades the science of linguistics was able to celebrate its second great triumph. By showing that genetically related languages vary according to well-defined rules of sound change, many of the world's idioms could for the first time be scientifically classified and grouped into families; families that indicate a historical kinship of their speakers. Thus, for example, most of the European tongues, as well as Persian and Hindi, were grouped in the Indo-European family of languages, because they all seem to have sprung from the same origin as Sanskrit. On the other hand, Mongolian, Turkish and Uigur are designated Altaic, because they are believed to have been spoken mainly in the Altai mountains of central Asia, while Hebrew, Aramaic and Arabic are classified as Semitic, because some of the nations speaking these languages are mentioned in the Bible as being descendants of Shem. Japanese, however, is considered an "orphan" language: It does not seem to be related to any other known tongue. Or, as one prominent Japanese scholar says: "The Japanese language has

a unique position among the languages of the civilized countries. That is, there is absolutely no other language of a similar nature." And, he continues, "It is now obvious that, unlike the European languages, Japanese cannot be easily linked with any family of languages, and it will only be after the continuous efforts of many scholars that the question of the origin of the Japanese language is answered, if it ever is."[3] And thus, Japanese continues to maintain its unique position; it is not one member of a "family," and its relationship to other languages is still obscure.

As long as we do not find a language that is genetically related to Japanese, we can hardly hope to discover the origin of the Japanese people. The crucial question is: How do we know that two languages are genetically related?

The science of linguistics does not offer a clear-cut definition to judge whether two languages are genetically related; even so, it does give us some criteria and explanations. One scholar has explained it thus: "Among the thousands of words in one language, a number is likely to be similar in sounds to words of another language; and of this number again a small fraction, one or two or five in all, will happen to bear some resemblance in meaning also. In short, these similarities upon which a verdict of genetic relationship is based must be sufficiently numerous to fall well beyond the possibility of mere coincidence; and it must also be possible to prove with reasonable certainty that they are not the result of one language borrowing words from another."[4] This explanation, though elaborate, cannot be considered precise, of course, for it does not tell us what quantity of similar words should be regarded "sufficiently numerous" in order to reach a verdict that two languages are historically related; it expects us, in effect, to use our common sense.

But before deciding what number of similar words indicates that two languages are historically related, should we not first try to establish the probability that speakers of two unrelated languages would accidentally invent a single word that has the same sound and meaning? This step is important, because languages, at any given period, are established systems of communication, and systems, as a rule, do not allow for unaccountable coincidences.

Since there are no set rules for finding out whether the existence of a single similar word in two unrelated languages is the result of coincidence or the outcome of an ancient relationship, we shall have to devise a special

method to decide which of the alternatives to prefer. This method makes use of a somewhat neglected element of language – the syllable.

A syllable can be described as a unit of vocal articulation that enables the speakers of all languages to pronounce meaningful sentences. In fact, it is impossible to pronounce the words of a language without uttering them in a series of vocal articulations. Hence, since "language" is often defined as "a system of arbitrary *vocal symbols* used for human communication," when the "vocal symbols" can only be pronounced as a series of syllables, we can modify this definition and, without impairing its accuracy, state that "language is a system of arbitrary *syllables* used for human communication."[5] This definition will be the basis for our attempt to establish the probability that the speakers of two unrelated languages would accidentally use the same sequence of syllables to convey identical meanings. An example or two will be of some help.

Every language has a definite number of syllabic types that enable its speakers to coin a large number of words. The quantity of these syllabic types, however, is not the same in all languages. Thus, for example, while the English language may have as many as 3,000 syllabic types,[6] the Japanese language has only 112. Suppose now that a race of human beings, living somewhere in outer space, and speaking an unknown language, has the same number and type of syllabic patterns in its idiom as the Japanese language: what is the probability that the speakers of the outer-space language and the speakers of Japanese would accidentally invent a single disyllabic word that has the same sequence of syllables and the same meaning?

Elementary statistics, based on simple arithmetic, enables us to establish that there is less than one chance in one hundred million ($1/100{,}000{,}000$) that the speakers of the outer-space language would by mere chance coin a single disyllabic word that has the same sequence of syllables and the same meaning as in Japanese.[7] Furthermore, there is less than one chance in a trillion ($1/1{,}000{,}000{,}000{,}000$) that they would coincidentally form a trisyllabic word that has the same sequence of sounds and the same meaning as in Japanese. This implies that there is a very small likelihood that the speakers of two unrelated idioms would accidentally invent similar words. Consequently, an inkling of a direct or indirect historical relationship between the speakers of two unrelated languages arises even when just one similar word is found in their respective vocabularies.

This inference is correct only if a strictly mathematical approach is

used. In practice, though, finding a handful of similar words in two unrelated languages is absolutely meaningless; for without supporting evidence no conclusion can be certain. Hence, from a purely practical point of view, we can regard the few similar words as being the result of coincidence. But finding five hundred similar words in two unrelated languages cannot be easily dismissed as coincidence, particularly when this "coincidence" shows a consistent inclination to form the similar words with only one singled-out language.

There are, however, additional criteria by which we can judge whether the similar words found in two unrelated languages should be attributed to coincidence or ascribed to a common origin. The most conspicuous of these criteria are idiomatic phrases, and words with a particular historical significance. A cursory examination of these types of words and expressions will help clarify the point.

An idiomatic phrase is a complete expression whose meaning cannot be gathered from the meanings of its individual words. It is peculiar to every language, and it cannot be translated into another language without losing its original meaning. Thus, for example, unless one is familiar with the English language, it is impossible to guess that "to beat around the bush" means "to approach a matter in a roundabout way," and "to pull one's leg" means "to tease." Similarly, one has to be very well acquainted with the Hebrew language in order to know that "yashav shiv'a," literally meaning "to sit seven," actually implies "to mourn." Hence, finding similar idiomatic expressions in two unrelated languages is a strong indication that the speakers of the two languages must have maintained a close relationship in the remote past.

Another indication of an ancient relationship between nations are the similar words found in their respective languages that suggest a common geographical origin. This approach, known as "linguistic paleontology," has been used by scholars to trace the prehistoric territory of the Indo-European nations, and there is no reason why the same method could not be applied to trace the original territory of other nations also.

Like the traditional paleontology, which studies fossilized remains of plants and animals to trace the geological history of the earth, linguistic paleontology studies "fossilized" words to trace the background of prehistoric communities. It is known that in the course of time, vocabularies of all languages change, new words being constantly added, while many

others are gradually discarded. Some words, however, for an unknown reason, seem to be extremely tenacious and remain in a tongue for millennia. Indeed, an examination of Indo-European languages has revealed that many of them have retained in their vocabularies such ancient words as bear, beaver and wolf; horse, cow, and pig; beech, maple and oak; snow and rain; and wheel and axle. These words, considered to be at least several thousand years old, enabled scholars to draw a reasonably accurate picture of the prehistoric environment of the Indo-European tribes.

The words "bear", "beaver" and "wolf", scholars argued, indicate that the prehistoric Indo-European tribes dwelt in the Temperate Zone. It must have been in an area with alternate seasons of rain and snow, where forests of beech, maple and oak grew, and there must have been wide plains in that area, where horses could be used to drive herds of cattle to pastures, and wheeled wagons could be used for transportation. This description, many scholars have reasoned, fits the area north of the Black Sea, somewhere between the Volga and the Dnieper rivers, extending perhaps to the Danube Valley. In this region, it is believed, the prehistoric Indo-European tribes raised cattle and pigs, and rode horses to drive their herds to pastures in the wide plains.

This hypothesis, based on linguistic paleontology, eventually gained some support from archeological findings in the area of the so-called Kurgan culture. The "kurgans" were big mounds of earth raised over prehistoric graves, found between the Dnieper and the Volga, in which archeologists have discovered bones of domestic animals, battle-mallets, farming implements and wheels of wagons, giving clues about the lifestyle of the ancient Indo-European tribes. By comparing these findings with the discoveries made in other prehistoric graves both in Europe and in Asia, scholars have been able to form a theory about the early migrations of the Indo-European tribes. According to this theory, sometime between 3500 and 3000 B.C.E., a group of Indo-European tribes migrated southwest and settled in the Danube Valley, while another group migrated southeast and settled on the Iranian plateau. At first all the Indo-European tribes spoke a common language, known as Proto-Indo-European, but in the course of centuries as the tribes continued to split and to migrate, each tribe formed its own dialect. These dialects gradually developed into distinct languages, and today all those tongues belong to the Indo-European family of languages.

Linguistic paleontology has until now been applied only to the Indo-

European languages, but could it not be equally applied to other languages? Could it not be expanded a little, and used to examine the extent of the ancient relationship between the Japanese and the Hebrews?

Indeed it could. By expanding the scope of linguistic paleontology to include both historical and religious terms – as the following examples show – it is not difficult to recognize the Hebrew origin of the Japanese people.

The Hebrew words in these examples are printed in capitals, and the Japanese words in italics. The long vowels of the Japanese words are unmarked

HOZE	meaning "seer" in Hebrew, is an ancient biblical term used to designate a certain kind of prophet or diviner. Another word of the same root – HAZUI – is used in modern Hebrew to imply "bound to occur."
Heza	has no definite meaning in Japanese. It is known, however, that the term has been used in the past to designate "a diviner's assistant."[8] It is easy to see that the term *heza* is cognate of HOZE, because another Japanese word – *hazu* – is used to imply "bound to occur."
IABOK	is the biblical name of the Zarka river that rises in the mountains, north of the Jordanian city of Amman, and flows into the Jordan river. It is closely connected with the ancient history of the Hebrews; in fact, the name Israel was given to the Hebrew patriarch Jacob, near the river IABOK[9] (called Jabbok in the English version of the Bible).
Ibuki	The mountain of *Ibuki* is closely connected with the ancient history of Yamato. It is mentioned in the *Nihongi* as the dwelling place of a savage deity that the brave Prince Yamato-Dake wanted to subdue, but failed. On his way to encounter the savage deity, the Prince fell ill and was forced to abandon his mission. He eventually died in the moor of Nobo, not far from Mount *Ibuki.*[10]

KISH IDA	is an Aramaic expression for "hand clapping." Another Hebrew-Aramaic word for "clapping" is HAKASHA.
Kashiwade	of an unknown etymology – is a ceremonial hand clapping performed in the course of a Shinto prayer (see chapter 1). Another Japanese word for "hand clapping" is *hakusha.*
KEMOSHI	Kemosh was the tutelary deity of the people of Moab. The Bible refers to the people of Moab as "people of Kemosh,"[11] but in plain Hebrew they can be styled simply as KEMOSHI. When the people of Kemosh subjugated ancient Israel, a brave Hebrew, called Ehud, hid a dagger under his garments and went to the land of Moab. Upon reaching his destination, and using a ruse to enter the royal palace, Ehud stabbed to death the King of Moab and eventually subdued the KEMOSHI.[12]
Kumaso	The *Kumaso* are mentioned in the *Nihon-Shoki* as a wild tribe that constantly menaced the frontier towns of Yamato. To punish these tribes, Prince Yamato-Dake organized a small expedition and went to the land of *Kumaso.* Upon reaching his destination, the Prince hid a dagger under his garments, and using a ruse to enter the palace, he stabbed to death the leader of the wild tribes and eventually subdued the people of *Kumaso.*[13]
KUMTSA	literally meaning "a handful" – is used in the Bible to prescribe the "quantity of an offering" that should be presented to God.[14]
Kumotsu	an offering to a deity.
NEBO	is the biblical name of a mountain in the moor of Moab, south of the Iabok river, and not far from the moor of Jericho.
Nobo	is the name of a moor, not far from Mount Ibuki. According to the *Nihon-Shoki*, Prince Yamato-Dake died on the moor of *Nobo* (see the entry *Ibuki* above).

TOSHIA GOI	is a Hebrew expression, meaning "help the nation." Another version of the same expression – HOSHIA NA – meaning "please help," is still used by the Hebrews in prayers during the feast of Tabernacles, which is connected with the ingathering of the harvest.
Toshigoi	is the name of the feast in which the Japanese pray for a good harvest (see chapter 1).

TOSHVEI-GUMOT	is a Hebrew expression meaning "pit-dwellers." The Edomites, who often menaced the ancient Hebrews, are called in the Bible "thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock."[15]
Tshuchi-gumo	are described in the *Nihon-Shoki* as pit-dwelling tribes that often minced the people of Yamato.[16]

To conclude this part of our comparisons between some Hebrew and Japanese words, it might be interesting to present an additional example of a Japanese tradition that seems to be of Hebrew origin.

According to one of the Hebrew traditions, which dates back to biblical times, a person "ascends" when he travels toward Jerusalem – the capital – and "descends" when he leaves the town. The Japanese follow the same tradition. One "goes up" when he travels toward Tokyo – the capital – and "goes down" when he leaves the town (*noboru* and *kudaru* respectively). However, while in the case of Jerusalem there is a justification for "going up," because Jerusalem is situated in a hilly area, there is no such justification in the case of Tokyo; for Tokyo is situated close to the sea. The only explanation for this strange "going up" when traveling toward Tokyo, is that the people of Yamato had brought this tradition to Japan from their former homeland.

The foregoing examples of geographical names, idiomatic expressions and ancient traditions, clearly indicate that there must have been a very close relationship between the ancient Japanese and the Hebrews. And this conclusion is strongly supported by the many Hebrew words that the Japanese still use in their language today; five hundred of these words are presented in the next chapter.

Chapter six

Japanese Words of Hebrew Origin

There can be very little doubt that the existence of a large number of similar words in two languages is a clear indication that the speakers of the two languages must have maintained a close relationship in the remote past. The quantity "a large number" is not a scientific standard, of course, but since the science of linguistics does not provide us with a better definition, I submit five hundred Japanese words similar to Hebrew words as a "large enough" sample to be used as evidence of an ancient relationship between the speakers of the two languages. We should bear in mind, however, that the term "similar," in this case, implies either that the words are similar in sound and meaning, or that the variations are the result of systematic sound changes.

Another point to remember is that some variations in the pronunciation of similar words in two languages may be due to ancient dialects. The Bible tells us that at least one Hebrew tribe had a peculiar dialect,[1] but with twelve tribes there may have been quite a few dialects. However, for the sake of simplicity, I have taken the modern Hebrew pronunciation as "standard," and the Japanese as "dialectical."

Since the ancient Hebrews used both Aramaic and Syriac[2] words in their language, such words are marked as follows:

(A) indicates that the word is of Aramaic origin.
(S) indicates that the word is of Syriac origin.
(H) indicates that the word has historical significance.
(*) indicates a reconstructed word.

The transliteration of Japanese words, except for the long vowels, will follow the Hepburn system, while those of the Hebrew words, as close as possible to it. The long vowels of the Japanese words will be marked by double vowels. Hebrew words are capitalized; Japanese words are italicized.

GROUP I

Although the Japanese words presented in this group do not follow exact rules of change, the similarity between them and the Hebrew words is quite obvious. Note the frequent interchange of the *a* and *u* sounds between the Japanese and Hebrew words.

1.	AGAM	to be sad; to be wearied; to mourn
	Aguma	to be wearied
2.	AGAM	to be bent
	Yugami	to be bent; to warp
3.	AIKA (A)	anguish; sorrow; sadness
	Aika	a sad song
4.	AKA	weariness; distress
	Aki	weariness; tiresome
5.	AKAR	to leave a place; to depart from a place
	Akeru	to leave a place; to vacate a place
6.	ANAN	a cloud
	Inun	dark clouds
7.	ANTA	you
	Anata	you

8. ASEI (A) — to press
   Assei — oppression

9. AVAR — the past; termination of a period
   Owari — expiration; a termination

10. AVNA (A) — a stone
    Iwane — a rock

11. AZEN — to make horizontal
    Osen — a horizontal line

12. BAR (A) — the Aramaic word BAR, meaning "son" used in compound expressions to mean "age."
    Barei — one's age

13. BARER — to clarify; to ascertain; to find out
    Bareru — to find out; to come to light

14. DABER — to talk
    Daberu — to chatter

15. DAHA — to push away
    Daha — to overthrow

16. DAHA — to push away
    Dahi — deviation

17. DUN — to discuss; to argue; to converse
    Dan — talk; conversation

18. EPHOD (H) — the exact meaning of the ancient Hebrew word EPHOD is unknown. As part of the high priest's garment, it was a golden vest, decorated with two engraved onyx stones (Ex. 28:6–9), while King David, on certain important religious occasions,

		was girded with a linen EPHOD (2 Sam. 6:14). It is possible, therefore, that the EPHOD was a sacred charm.
	Ofuda	a wooden tablet on which is written the name of a deity. It is distributed by shrines and used as a sacred charm in the homes of the faithful Shintoists.
19.	GER	a stranger; a convert to Judaism
	Gairai	a stranger; an alien
20.	GOI	a stranger; a foreigner; a nation
	Gai	is used in compound words to indicate "foreign." Thus, *gaijin* means "a foreign person," and *gaiji* a "foreign language."
21.	GUD (A)	to form a group of people
	Godo	a coalition; a union
22.	GUNDA (A)	a band; a troop of soldiers
	Gundan	an army corps
23.	HADA	to guide; to direct; to lead
	Hodo	guidance; direction
24.	HAER	to shine; to brighten
	Haeru	to shine
25.	HAKAR	to explore; to investigate
	Hakaru	to survey; to consult
26.	HAKE	to beat
	Haku	a beat
27.	HAKE	to wait
	Hikae	waiting

28. HARA — to be angry
Hara — anger

29. HARAV — to ruin; to destroy
Horobu — to go to ruin; to cease to exist

30. HATSA'A — a suggestion; a proposal
Hatsuan — a suggestion; a proposal

31. HATSA'A — a suggestion, a proposal
Hatsui — a suggestion (see also No. 30)

32. HAYA (A) — quickly
Hayai — quick; fast

33. HAYA — to recover from illness
Heiyu — a recovery from illness

34. HAZAZA — to put out of place
Hazusu — to put out of place

35. HEDU — joy
Hade — gaiety

36. HEKER — measure (from the same root as No. 25)
Hakari — measure

37. HEN — grace; beauty; loveliness
Hin — grace; dignity; elegance

38. HEVIA — a serpent
Hebi — a snake; a serpent

39. HOK — law; rule; custom; regulation
Hoki — laws and regulations (see also No. 40)

40. HOKAN* — a person who is concerned with law. Although

this word does not exist in the Hebrew language, it is, nevertheless, of an acceptable construction. Based on the word HOK, meaning "law," and the suffix "AN," used to indicate occupation, the word HOKAN may mean either "judge" or "lawyer" (see also No. 39).

Hokan — a judicial officer; a judge

41. HORER — to make a hole; to hollow out
Horeru — to hollow out

42. INKA (A) — throat; neck
Inko — the throat

43. KA'ARA — a bowl
Koro — a bowl

44. KA'ASA (A) — anger; grief; fury (see also No. 28)
Kyoso — fury; frenzy

45. KABETS — to collect things, particularly alms or charities
Kobutsu — used things, or second-hand articles. This word must have undergone a slight semantic change. From KABETS – to collect used things for charity – it simply changed to mean "used things."

46. KABETS — to bring people together; to assemble people
Kobetsu — "each house." Like No. 45, this word too must have undergone a semantic change. From KABETS – to go from house to house and bring the people together – it changed to mean "each house."

47. KAMA — cereals in general
Kome — rice

48. KAMEIN (A) — to hide; to conceal; to cover
Kamen — a mask; a disguise

49.	KARA	to cut open; to tear; to split; to rend
	Kiru	to cut; to slash
50.	KARA	to dig; to excavate; to hollow out
	Kuru	to excavate; to hollow out
51.	KARAS (S)	to be dried up
	Karasu	to dry up
52.	KARER	to cool; to contract a cold
	Kareru	to get hoarse (when a person contracts a cold, his voice usually becomes hoarse)
53.	KASA	to cover; to hide; to conceal
	Kaso	a guise; a disguise (see also No. 48)
54.	KASA	to protect; to cover
	Kasa	an umbrella (that "protects" from rain)
55.	KASHA	to ask questions
	Kosho	investigation
56.	KASHAR	to prepare
	Koshirae	preparation
57.	KAVA	to convey water into a canal or a basin
	Kawa	a river; a stream; a brook
58.	KEN	and; in addition to
	Ken	and; in addition
59.	KIRA (A)	buying; sale
	Kaiire	buying; purchase
60.	KIYUM	existence; sustenance; livelihood
	Kyumei	lifesaving

61.	KO	thus; like this
	Ko	thus; like this
62.	KOKARA (A)	a trap
	Kakaru	fall into a trap; be trapped
63.	KONEN	to lament. In the Hebrew tradition, "commemoration" is synonymous with "lamentation." Thus, for example, on the ninth day of the fifth month (Hebrew lunar calendar) people read the biblical Book of Lamentations, to commemorate the destruction of the ancient temple.
	Kinen	commemoration
64.	KOR	cold
	Kori	ice
65.	KOR	cold
	Koru	to freeze (see also Nos. 52 and 64)
66.	KOSHI	difficulty; obstacle; trouble
	Kosho	obstacle; hindrance; trouble
67.	KRIA	reading, especially from the Scriptures
	Koryo	finishing proofreading
68.	KUBITA (S)	a cap; a hood
	Kabuto	a helmet; a headpiece
69.	KURGA (S)	a traveling bag; a pouch
	Karage	a bundle
70.	KUZA (A)	a jug; a wine pitcher
	Kizai	vessels; utensils
71.	MA'VAR	a passage; a change of direction; a detour
	Mawaru	to go round; to take a roundabout way

72.	MAGOR	a dwelling; an apartment
	Magari	renting a room; take lodgings
73.	MAGOV	a rake
	Maguwa	a rake
74.	MARA (A)	poison
	Moru	to poison (a person)
75.	MATA	below, downward
	Moto	under
76.	MEGAMA	direction; purpose; intention; attitude
	Migamae	an attitude
77.	METSAR	trouble; suffering; difficulty
	Motsure	trouble; complication; difficulty
78.	MISHGE	mistake; error
	Michigai	mistake
79.	MITS	juice (from fruits)
	Mitsu	nectar
80.	MONO (A)	a thing; a garment
	Mono	a thing; an object
81.	MOTSA	literally, means "exit;" however, in some idiomatic expressions, this word is used to imply "end of a period," or "end of a holy day." Thus, for example, MOTSA-SHABBAT (MOTSAEI-SHABBAT) means "end of the Sabbath."
	Matsu	is a suffix used to designate the end of a period. Thus, for example, *shuu-matsu* (*shuumatsu*) means "weekend."

82. NAGAV — to wipe
Nuguu — to wipe; to mop

83. NAKAM — to revenge; to avenge
Nikumu — to hate; to detest. This word seems to have undergone a slight semantic change. Since revenge is generally preceded by a long period of hatred, the original meaning of *Nikumu* appears to have changed from "revenge" to "hatred."

84. NAKAR — to pierce; to remove
Nokeru — to remove

85. NAKA — to clean; to remove
Nuku — to take out (a stain); to remove

86. NASA — literally, to bear, or to carry. Sometimes, however, the same word may be used to imply "pregnant" (carrying a child).
Nasu — to bear (a child)

87. NASE — to try; to attempt
Nasu — to try; to attempt

88. NIGAR — flowing, particularly the flowing of water
Nagare — the flow of water

89. NISA — a flag; a banner; a sign
Nusa — also called *gohei*, is a paper or cloth pendant, attached to a stick in a flag-like form, used in Shinto shrines for purification. It is interesting to note here, that a NISA (NESS, in Hebrew) consisting of a serpent of brass, set upon a pole, was used by Moses to heal the ancient Hebrews from snake bites – apparently through a purification ceremony (Num. 21:8–9).

90.	RA'AM	a thunder
	Raimei	a thunder
91.	RA'ASH	noise; commotion; earthquake
	Resshin	a violent earthquake
92.	RAKIA	the sky
	Ryoku	territorial sky
93.	RANEN	literally, to sing; the same word is often used, however, to imply "adverse criticism," or "denunciation."
	Ronnan	adverse criticism
94.	REAYA	from the root of RA'A meaning "to see," the word REAYA means "evidence" or "proof." It is sometimes used, however, to imply "reason" – based on an example – for an action, an event, or a belief (see also No. 95).
	Riyuu	reason; cause
95.	REI	from the same root as No. 94, the word may imply either "to see the reason of" or "to show" (by example).
	Rei	an example
96.	RESHA	wickedness; evil
	Roshu	evil practice
97.	SA'AR (S)	to do; to act; to perform
	Suru	to do
98.	SAGAR	to close; to bar; to block
	Saegiru	to bar; to block; to obstruct

99.	SHAGAM (A)	to bend
	Shagamu	to sit down upon the heels, or to crouch; in both cases it is to be in a bent posture.
100.	SHAMASHUT	service, particularly the service section (administration) of a synagogue.
	Shamusho	the administrative section of a Shinto shrine
101.	SHANEN	to teach; to learn
	Shinan	teaching; instructions
102.	SHASE	to incite; to instigate
	Shiso	incitement; instigation
103.	SHEM	name; title
	Shimei	a full name; identity
104.	SHENA	sleep
	Shin	go to bed
105.	SHETSEI (A)	to go out
	Shutsuya	an outing; an excursion
106.	SHIT	bottom; foundation
	Shita	the bottom; the base
107.	SHOTE	stupid; foolish; mad
	Shutai	disgraceful behavior; shameful conduct
108.	SHUK (A)	to come in contact
	Shokai	introduction
109.	SHUKA (A)	market
	Shoka	a commercial house
110.	SHUMA (A)	an estimate
	Shima	a conjecture; a guess

111. SHURA (A) — fortification; stronghold
Shiro — a fortress; a stronghold

112. SHUT — to sail in a boat
Shotei — a small boat

113. SIKA — a coulter of a plow; a spade
Suki — a plow; a spade

114. SIYUM — conclusion; end; finish
Sumu — to conclude; to end; to terminate

115. SOTO (A) — sweepings; refuse
Soto — sweeping; clearing

116. SOTO (S) — a sweet savor
Sato — sugar

117. TAIRA (S) — a bird
Tori — a bird

118. TAR'A (A) — a gate; a door
Torii — the distinctive gate erected at the entrance to a Shinto shrine

119. TAYAR — a spy usually sent out to bring information
Tayori — intelligence; information

120. TEURA — illumination; arrangement of lights
Tooroo — lantern; particularly the lanterns erected to illuminate the lanes of shrines (see also No. 121).

121. TEURA — illumination
Teru — to shine (see also No. 120)

122. TSARA — trouble; anguish; distress
Tsurai — heartbreaking; cruel; painful (see also No. 123)

123. TSUKA — distress; trouble; anguish
Tsuku — anguish; pain; agony (see also No. 122)

124. UMAT — in front of
Omote — the front. It is interesting to note here that the ancient Hebrews referred to the east as "front," and to the west as "back." The Japanese continue this tradition and refer to the Pacific side of Japan (east) as Omote-Nihon, actually meaning "front of Japan."

125. YA'AN — because; the reason why
Yuen — the reason why

126. YAD — hand
Ude — arm (hand)

127. YADAM* — although this word is not known in the Hebrew language, it is nevertheless of a correct grammatical construction, and can be construed as "to be at rest," or "to be stagnant."
Yodomu — to be stagnant; to be sluggish

128. YADUR — from the root DUR, "to dwell;" "to lodge"
Yadoru — to dwell; to lodge

129. YAE — nice; good; fine
Yoi — nice; good; fine

130. YAM — sea; lake
Umi — sea; ocean

131. YARA — to shoot
Iru — to shoot

132. YIR'A — fear; anxiety
Yuryo — fear; anxiety

133. YURSHE — will be permitted
Yurushi — permission; approval

GROUP II

This group presents Japanese words that either elide the *l* sound of Hebrew words, or change it into an *r*; in some words the *l* sound is changed into a vowel or a semivowel. This, of course, is in addition to the types of changes that have been shown in Group 1.

134. AKAL — to round; to twist
Ukai — a roundabout way; a detour

135. AL — on; on top
Ue — on; on top

136. ALAL — to gather and bring in the harvest
Ireru — to bring in

137. ALATS — to rejoice
Etsu — joy; amusement

138. ALIL (A) — entrance
Iri — entrance; entry (see also No. 139)

139. ALIL (A) — entrance
Irie — an inlet; a small bay (see also No. 138)

140. ALMIN (A) — eternities; BEIT-ALMIN, meaning "House of Eternities," designates a cemetery.
Eimin — eternal sleep; death

141. ATSAL — to be slow; to be lazy
Itsu — idleness; leisure

142. BALA — to be worn out
Biyo — a slight illness (see also Nos. 143 and 144)

143. BALA — to be worn out
Byo- — a prefix used for designating "ill" or "sick" (see also Nos. 142 and 144)

144. BLIYA — from the same root as BALA, this word can be used to imply "tiredness" or "weariness."
Buryo — wearisomeness; boredom (see also Nos. 142 and 143)

145. DAHALA — a worshiper
Daihai — to worship (for another); vicarious worship

146. GALGEL — to roll; to turn (see also No. 296)
Guru-guru — go round and round; in a circle

147. HA'ALE — literally, to raise; it is often used, however, in the sense of "to put on."
Haoru — to put on

148. HAIL — an army; a military force
Hei — an army; troops

149. HALAL (S) — to purify
Harai — a Shinto purification ceremony

150. HALEL — to abuse; to profane
Hei — an abuse; a vice

151. HALUKA — division; distribution. Is often used to designate the distribution of money or food.
Haikyu — distribution; supply; rationing

152. HAYAL — a soldier; a military man
Hei — a soldier (see also No. 148)

153. HEIL — a low wall used as a fence
Hei — a wall; a fence

154. HITUL — a bandage
Hotai — a bandage

155. HOL — a legendary bird (Phoenix)
Ho — a Phoenix

156. HUL — to turn in a circle
Hoi — encirclement

157. ILA — intrigue; pretext
Iiai — a dispute; a quarrel

158. ILI — superior; supreme; exalted
Eii — an exalted position (see also Nos. 159 and 160)

159. ILUI — from the same root as ILI, the word implies "high ranking" (in talent) or "esteemed."
Iyo — dignified appearance; dignity (see also Nos. 158 and 160)

160. ILUI — from the same root as ILI, the word implies "great" (in knowledge); illustrious.
Erai — great; celebrated; illustrious (see also Nos. 158 and 159)

161. KABEL — to receive; to take an obligation upon oneself
Kaburu — to take upon oneself (another's fault)

162. KAHAL — a crowd; a community; a congregation
Kai — a suffix used to designate "a community" or "a society" (see also No. 163)

163. KAHAL — a gathering (of people)
Kai — a gathering; a meeting (see also No. 162)

164. KAL — of low rank; lowly
Kai — a low rank; a low grade

165.	KALA	end. Often used to designate the end of a period.
	Kure	end. Often used to designate the end of a period.
166.	KALIL	light; not heavy
	Karui	light; not heavy
167.	KALKALA	supply of provisions; supply of food
	Kyokyu	supply; provision
168.	KASHAL	to stumble; to be led to sin
	Koshoo	a stumbling block; an obstacle; something wrong
169.	KLI	a vessel; a container
	Ki	a vessel; a container
170.	KLI	a tool; an instrument
	Ki	a tool; an instrument
171.	KLI	wearing apparel; garment
	Ki	wearing
172.	KLI MONO*	such a word does not exist in the modern Hebrew language. However, the combination of the words KLI and MONO (see also No. 80) produces the concept of "a wearing thing."
	Kimono	literally, "a wearing thing," is the famous Japanese robe. The word is composed of *ki*, meaning "wearing" and *mono* – "thing."
173.	KLI'A	detention; custody
	Koryu	detention; custody
174.	KOL	voice; sound
	Koe	voice
175.	KOL	all; the whole
	Kei	in all; the sum total

176. KOLU (S) — hindrance; impediment
Kuro — troubles; hardships; difficulties

177. KOSHEL — from the same root as KASHAL (see also No. 168), this word is sometimes applied to designate "a sinner."
Kashoo — corruption

178. KUL — to measure
Kei — a meter; a gauge

179. MA'AGAL — a circle
Meguru — to go round (see also No. 71)

180. MALAL — to speak; to proclaim
Meirei — a decree; an order; a command

181. MALE — full; complete
Maru — full; complete

182. ME'ALA (A) — coming in; entering
Mairu — to come

183. ME'ULE — finest quality
Murui — finest quality

184. MUL — in front of; opposite
Mae — the front (see also No. 124)

185. NAHALA — land property, usually agricultural land
Nohara — a field; a prairie

186. NOAL — stupid; foolish
Naore — disgrace

187. TABEL (A) — literally, to dip into; in effect it implies to eat a meal by dipping the food into salt or vinegar. It is

quite possible that the original meaning of TABEL was to eat by dipping a piece of bread into the food – as is so often seen in the Middle East.

Taberu to eat

188. TALA to hang; to suspend
Tare a hanging; a flap

189. TALGA (A) snow; cold; chill; frost
Toogai frost damage

190. TALIL (A) lifted up; high
Toyo elevation; promotion

191. TOL to take; to hold
Toru to take; to hold

192. TUL (A) to walk about
Tooru to go along; to walk over

GROUP III

This group presents those Japanese words of Hebrew origin in which, in addition to the changes mentioned in the previous groups, the sounds *s* and *sh* either interchange, or become transformed into a *ch* sound.

193. HASHIR to let fall; to cause to drop
Ochiru to fall; to drop; to come down

194. KASHAR to join; to knot; to make a loop; to tie
Kusari a chain; fetters

195. KOSHI hardness; difficulty (see also No. 66)
Kosei hardness

196. KUSH (A) a reed
Kusa grass

197. MISH'OL — a path; a lane; a narrow road
Michi — a road; a way; a path; a lane

198. NASI — a president; a chief; a ruler; a prince
Nushi — a master; the owner

199. SHA'A — to care for
Choi — to sympathize with

200. SHA'A — to pay attention; to heed
Chui — attention; heed

201. SHA'A — time; the time when
Sai — the time (when); at the time

202. SHAGA — to be wrong; be mistaken (see also No. 78)
Chigau — to be wrong; be mistaken

203. SHAGA — to be lost; to stray
Sogai — estrangement; alienation

204. SHAKHAL — to bereave; to lose a member of the family
Soka — a family in mourning

205. SHAKYA (A) — a trough
Chiko — a trough

206. SHALA — to remove, mostly from the water
Sarai — dredging

207. SHALAL — to capture; to carry off; booty
Sarau — to carry off; snatch away

208. SHALVA — calmness; contentment; happiness
Saiwai — happiness

209. SHAMA — to hear; to listen
Chomon — a hearer; a listener

210. SHAMAR — to watch; to guard; to protect
Samurau (H) — an ancient Japanese word meaning "to be on guard"

211. SHAMRAI* — a guard. Although this word does not exist in the Hebrew language, it is, nevertheless, of an accepted grammatical construction, and may have been used in the past to designate "a guard." The suffix "AI" is used in the Hebrew language to designate either the occupation of a person or his character. Thus, for example, from the word BANA, meaning "to build," we have BANAI, meaning "a builder."

In the same way it is quite possible that from the word SHAMAR, meaning "to guard," the ancient Hebrews used the word SHAMRAI, to designate "a guard."

Samurai (H) — a warrior. The ancient class of *Samurai* warriors emerged during the Heian period, when owners of big estates had to hire guards to protect their property from marauders. In the course of time, the men whose duty was to *Samurau*, meaning "to be on guard" (see also No. 210), became *Samurai* – "guards." These guards gradually developed into organizations of professional warriors, always ready to fight for their lords.

212. SHA'ON — noise; uproar
Soon — noise

213. SHATE — to fool
Chitai — foolery; silliness

214. SHAUL (H) — the Hebrew name of King Saul, about whom the

Bible says that "there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than any of his people" (1 Sam. 9:2).

Chiuai (H) an emperor who reigned during the Yamato period, about whom the *Nihon-Shoki* says: "The Emperor's countenance was of perfect beauty, and his stature was ten feet" (Nihongi, p. 217).

215. SHAVA to call out or to cry for help
Sewa help; aid; assistance

216. SHAVE even; equivalent; equal
Chowa symmetry (see also No. 217)

217. SHAVE to equalize; to make even
Chuwa counteraction – to equalize (see also No. 216)

218. SHOI (A) conversation; a tale; a talk
Sawa table talk; small talk

219. SHUKA (A) desire; satisfaction
Suku to like; to care for; to take delight in

220. SHUT to sail; to boat; to row
Sotei rowing; boating (see also No. 112)

221. SIMA putting; placing
Shimau to put away

222. SIRA (A) a surrounding place; a prison
Shiro a stronghold; a fortress

223. SISA joy; gladness
Chiso entertainment; a feast

224. SIYUMA (A) end; conclusion; termination
Shimau to end; to conclude; to put an end to

GROUP IV (A)

In addition to the changes presented in the other groups, this group will present those Japanese words that have changed the Hebrew sound *h* into a vowel, and the sound *kh* into *k*. (To facilitate the comparison between the Hebrew and Japanese words in this group, the sound of some Hebrew words has been transliterated into *kh*.)

225. AKHAM (A) — to be sunburnt
Akami — redness; a reddish tinge

226. AKHORI (A) — another; something else
Akuru- — a prefix used to designate "next," or "the following"

227. BEKHIYA — literally "weeping." In the Bible, however, where it says, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and we wept, when we remembered Zion," the word BEKHIYA is synonymous with "homesickness," to return to Zion – the homeland of the Hebrews (Ps. 137:1).
Bokyo — homesickness; nostalgia

228. HABURA (S) — smoke; fumes
Iburu — smoke; to fume

229. HAHZARA — giving back; returning
Yuzuru — to turn over; transfer

230. HAHZARA — reflection (from a mirror)
Eizuru — be reflected (in a mirror)

231. HALAKH — to go; to walk; to depart
Yuku — to go; to travel (see also No. 232)

232. HALAKH — to go; to walk; to depart
Hoko — a walk; walking (see also No. 231)

233. HALAKH — to depart; sometimes used with the implication "to depart this life"
Yuku — to die; to depart this life

234. HALOM — a dream; an illusion
Yume — a dream; an illusion

235. HATRAKHA — to put to work; to put a task on
Hataraku — to work; to labor; to toll

236. HAVAL — an exclamation to express sorrow; grief
Aware — sorrow; grief

237. HILUKH — from the same root as HALAKH (see also No. 231), means "a walk"; walking
Aruka — to walk; to go on foot

238. HORA (A) — a hole; a cavity
Uro — a hole; a cavity (see also No. 41)

239. HOREI (A) — behind; in the back of; after
Ura — the back/ the rear. It is interesting to note here that the ancient Hebrews referred to the east as "front," and to the west as "back." The Japanese continue this tradition and refer to the Sea of Japan side of their country (west) as Ura-Nihon, actually meaning "back of Japan" (see also No. 124).

240. HUSH (A) — to feel pain; to suffer
Aishu — sadness; sorrow; grief

241. HUT — a thread; yarn
Ito — a thread; yarn

242. KAKHA — thus; so; like this
Kaku — thus; so; like this

243. KUKH — a cavity; a cave; a pit
Koko — a shaft (mine); a pit

244. LEKHA — moisture; secretion
Eki — liquid; secretion

245. SHALAKH — to send; to forward
Shukka — forwarding; shipment

246. SHEKHAR — an alcoholic drink
Sake — an alcoholic drink; rice wine

247. YUKHLA — power; ability
Iko — power; authority

GROUP IV (B)

This group presents Japanese words that have changed the sounds *h* and *kh* of Hebrew words into *k, ch,* or *sh.*

248. AKHOR — the back; the rear
Ushiro — the back; the rear

249. HABURA — a wound; a scar
Kabure — an eruption on the skin

250. HABURA (S) — smoke; fumes
Keburi — smoke; fumes (see also No. 228)

251. HAKAK — to engrave; to carve
Chokoku — engraving; carving

252. HAKAKH — to rub; to scratch
Kaku — to scratch

253. HAKAL (A) — a farm; an estate
Koka — farming; agriculture

254. HAKHAHSA — denial; contradiction
Uchikeshi — denial; negation

255. HALAL — empty space; hollow
Kara — emptiness; hollowness

256. HALSHIN — to slander; to speak evil of. It is often used with the meaning of "to betray."
Kashin — treachery; an evil intention

257. HAMAL — to have compassion
Kamau — to care about; be concerned about; have regard for

258. HARAR — to be blackened
Kuroi — black

259. HASAKH (S) — to restrain; to keep back
Kosoku — restraint; restriction

260. HASE (S) — just; pure; holy
Kosei — justice; fairness (see also No. 261)

261. HASE (S) — venerable – a title frequently applied to priests
Kosei — an ancient sage; an old saint (see also No. 260)

262. HAYA — to recover from illness
Chiyu — healing; cure; recovery (see also No. 33)

263. HAZAKA — an ancient Hebrew custom giving a person the right to take hold of a certain property, if his claim is based on many years of actually using it.
Kozoku — an ancient custom

264. HEILA — a valley; a glen
Kyo — a ravine; a gorge

265. HEVEL	the pains of childbirth; throes of birth
Kaburu	to have labor pains
266. HIBUR	a tie; a junction; a connection
Shibaru	to tie; to bind; to fasten
267. HIMUTS	fermentation
Kamosu	to brew – usually by fermentation
268. NUAKH (S)	literally, "to be at rest," it is often used to designate "the deceased."
Naki	the deceased; the dead
269. SHAHAR	dawn
Shoko	dawn

GROUP V

Similar to the modifications connected with the *l* sound of Hebrew words (Group 2), this group will present some Japanese words that have either elided the *r* sound of Hebrew words, or have changed them into a vowel.

270. BA'AR	to burn
Boya	a small fire
271. HAVER	a friend
Hobai	a friend
272. HORESH	a small forest; a thicket
Hayashi	a forest; a wood
273. KABIR	great; magnificent; splendid
Kabi	splendor; pomp
274. KARA	the word KARA, literally "to tear apart," is connected in the Hebrew tradition with the great

miracle of "tearing apart" the Red Sea to enable the Hebrews to escape from Egypt (Ex. 14:21).

Kyoi a wonder; a miracle

275. KARKA land; ground; lot
Koku a suffix used for designating land in the sense of country (see also Nos. 276 and 277)

276. KARKA land; ground; lot
Koku a mining field; a mine-lot (see also Nos. 275 and 277)

277. KARKA land; ground; lot
Kokka "land," in the sense of "country" or "state" (see also Nos. 275 and 276)

278. KARYA (A) accident; mishap
Kyo misfortune; calamity

279. KERA (A) a banquet
Kyo a banquet

280. KIRYA a big city; a town
Kyo a metropolis; the capital

281. NAGAR (S) to be long
Nagai long; lengthy

282. RA'A to see; to meet (see also No. 284)
Au to see; to meet

283. RAMA a high place; a mountainous area
Yama a mountain

284. RAUI from the same root as RA'A (No. 282); fit; worthy; be suited
Au fit; be suited (see also No. 282)

285. REGEL — pilgrimage – one of the three compulsory pilgrimages to the ancient Hebrew temple to celebrate a festival.
Yugyo — a pilgrimage

286. RENA (S) — to meditate; to reflect; to intend
Yonen — absorbedly; intently; wholeheartedly

287. RESHA (A) — head; chief; superior
Yushu — superiority

288. ROSHI — main; most important; the principal point
Yoshi — the essential point; the gist

289. SEDER — order; arrangement; administration; system
Seido — a system; administration; an organization.

290. TORA — teaching; law; a disciple (of study)
Toya — training; education

GROUP VI

This group presents Japanese words that have changed the *g* sound of Hebrew words into the sounds of *k, j,* or *h.* This, of course, is in addition to the changes presented in the previous groups.

291. GA'ASH — to quake; to be agitated
Jishin — an earthquake

292. GADAL — to make big; to increase; to exceed
Kado — excess; immoderation (see also Nos. 293, 294 and 295)

293. GADAL — to make big; to magnify; to increase
Kodai — exaggeration; magnification (see also Nos. 292, 294 and 295)

294. GADOL — from the same root as GADAL; big; vast; great
Kodai — vast; extensive; immense (see also Nos. 292, 293 and 295)

295. GADOL — from the same root as GADAL; big; vast; great. Thus, for example, the Hebrew Bible uses the word GADOL to describe the greatness of King Solomon (1 Kings, 10:23).
Kodai — grand; sublime; excellent (see also Nos. 292, 293, and 294)

296. GALGEL — to roll; to turn; to tumble
Korogaru — to roll; to tumble

297. GALIL — a district in Israel. In the Bible it is called "the land of Galil"– Galilee in English (1 Kings, 9:11).
Kori (H) — a district; a country

298. GALYA (S) — a captive
Horyo — a prisoner (of war)

299. GAMAR — to decide; to end; to settle
Kimaru — be decided; be settled

300. GAN — a garden
Koen — a park; a garden

301. GARAS — to crush to pieces
Hasai — crushing to pieces

302. GAYAFA — an adulterer
Joofu — a lover; a beloved person

303. GAZA — to be brought by the wind
Kaze — wind

304. GAZAM — to cut; to trim (see also Nos. 305 and 306)
Kizamu — to cut; to carve

305. GAZAM — to cut; to trim (see also Nos. 304 and 306)
Hasamu — to snip; to clip

306. GAZAM — to cut; to trim (see also Nos. 304 and 305)
Hasami — scissors; shears

307. GAZAR — to cut; to split
Kezuru — to chip; to shave (wood)

308. GESHER — a bridge
Hashi — a bridge

309. GIHA (A) — flame; light
Hi — fire; flame; light

310. GLID — ice; frozen water
Hyo — snow pellet; hail

311. GLIMA — a coat; a cloak; an upper garment
Koromo — a garment; clothes; a dress

312. GOME — papyrus – used in ancient times for making paper
Kami — paper

313. GUL (A) — to roll up
Kuru — to reel; to wind

314. GUSHA (A) — ground; soil
Jisho — land; ground

315. MAGER — to defeat; to destroy; to bring down
Makeru — to be defeated; to come down

316. MEGILA — a scroll; a roll; a volume; a book
Maki — a roll; a volume; a book

317. NEGAL (S) — to flee; to run away
Nukeru — to escape; to get away

318. REGEL — pilgrimage – one of the three compulsory pilgrimages to the ancient Hebrew temple to celebrate a festival.
Reijo — a pilgrimage (see also No. 285)

GROUP VII

This group presents Japanese words that have changed the *b* and *v* sounds of Hebrew words into an *m*. This, of course, is in addition to the changes presented in the other groups.

319. AVA (S) — thick; heavy
Omoi — heavy

320. BA'ASH — to emit a bad smell; to do wrong; to do evil
Masho — an evil spirit; devilishness

321. BUSHLA (S) — boiled food
Meshi — boiled rice

322. EVEL — mourning
Imi — mourning

323. GA'AVAN — haughty; proud (see also No. 324)
Jiman — pride; boast

324. GA'AVAN — haughty; proud (see also No. 323)
Koman — pride; haughtiness

325. HAVAR — to fasten; to join
Hamaru — to fit into; to get into

326. HABURA (S) — smoke; steam (see also No. 228)
Kemuri — smoke; fumes

327. KABED — to sweep; to clean
Kumade — a rake (used for sweeping)

328. KABEL — to receive (see also No. 161)
Komuru — to get; to receive

329. KAVAL — to feel oppressed; to complain
Komaru — to be distressed; be troubled

330. LEVI (H) — an ancient Hebrew priestly clan
Imi (H) — an ancient Japanese priestly clan

331. SAVAR — to think; to imagine; to hope
Tsumori — an intention; an expectation; hope

332. SHEV — from the root YASHAV; to sit; to dwell; to reside
Sumu — to dwell; to reside

333. SHEVER — provisions; supply of food
Semai — relief rice; rice given in charity

334. TAVA (A) — good; precious (see also No. 335)
Tama — a precious stone

335. TAVA (A) — good; precious (see also No. 334)
Tame — good; advantage

336. TAVAL — to spice; to season
Tsuma — a relish; a condiment

337. TSAVAR — to accumulate; to collect; to gather
Tsumoru — to accumulate; to pile up

GROUP VIII

This group presents Japanese words, which in addition to the changes presented in the other groups, have changed the *p* sound of Hebrew words into an *f* and *h*.

338. PA'AM	to step
Fumi	to step on; to tread on
339. PAGA	to meet by coincidence
Fugo	coincidence
340. PAGA	undeveloped; mostly applied to undeveloped fruit, or an undeveloped child.
Fugu	deformity; abnormality
341. PAKAR	to be free; licentious
Fuki	liberty; unrestrained
342. PAKHA	to ooze; to flow out (liquid)
Fuku	to spout; to send forth
343. PALYA (A)	old
Furui	old
344. PARA	to pay; to pay back a debt
Harai	payment
345. PARAH	to flourish; to bloom; to be successful
Furuu	to flourish; to thrive; be prosperous
346. PARAH	literally, "to fly off," is applied to designate a vagrant person
Furo	vagrancy
347. PARATS	to burst; to break through
Haretsu	bursting; explosion; rupture

348. PASHAL (A) — to twist; to tie a knot
Fushi — a joint; a knot

349. PASHOSHA — a tiny, not migratory songbird, found in Israel
Fucho — a bird of paradise

350. PASUL — unfit; disqualified
Fusai — want of ability; inaptitude

351. PATER — to divorce; to dismiss; to be free from obligation
Futtsuri — be through with (a woman); to break entirely with

352. PEGA — accident; misfortune
Fugu — misfortune; bad luck

353. PEHI (A) — despair; disappointment
Fuhei — discontent; displeasure (see also No. 354)

354. PEHI (A) — despair; disappointment
Fukyo — displeasure; ill-humor (see also No. 353)

355. PETA — suddenly
Futo — suddenly

356. PUAH (A) — to blow; to blow the soul out (die)
Fuki — to pass away; to depart this life

357. PUAH (A) — to dishearten
Fuko — sorrow; grief

358. PUHA (A) — breath; wind (see also No. 359)
Fuha — a storm; a tempest

359. PUHA (A) — breath; wind (see also No. 358)
Fuku — to blow; to breathe

GROUP IX (A)

This group shows how the Hebrew preposition *le* – meaning "to" – which is used to form the infinitive, has become the Japanese postposition *ru* – used in what is called "the dictionary form." (The prepositions *la* and *li* of the Hebrew words are variants of *le*.)

360. LE-AKHER — to be late
Okure-ru — to be late

361. LE-ASEM — to store the harvest
Osame-ru — to store; to harvest

362. LA-DOM — from the root of DAMAM; to be quiet; to keep still (see also No. 381)
Dama-ru — to become silent; to stop speaking

363. LE-HAHZIK — to hold; to keep; to keep in trust
Azuke-ru — to entrust a person with a thing; to place a thing in another person's custody

364. LE-HASHLIM — from the same root as the Hebrew word SHALOM, meaning "peace"; to make peace.
Osama-ru — to be at peace; to be pacified (see also Nos. 365, 366 and 372)

365. LE-HASHLIM — from the root of SHALAM, meaning "to end"; to bring an end
Osama-ru — to come to an end (see also Nos. 364, 366 and 372)

366. LE-HASHLIM — to be indifferent; to be apathetic
Osama-ru — to be indifferent (see also Nos. 364, 365 and 372)

367. LA-HUSH — to hurry; to be quick to do something
Hashi-ru — to rush; to dart

368. LE-KOMEM	to build; to reconstruct; to rebuild
Kamae-ru	to build; to construct
369. LI-KROA	from the root of KARA (see also No. 49); to tear apart; to cut off; to take away.
Kire-ru	to break off; to be disconnected; to be cut off
370. LE-MARER	to grieve; to be bitter about something
Momare-ru	to see hardships; to be tried
371. LA-NUM	to doze; to drowse
Nemu-ru	to doze; to sleep
372. LE-SHALEM	from the root of SHALAM (see also No. 365); to pay.
Osama-ru	to be paid (see also Nos. 364, 365 and 366)
373. LE-SHASOT	from the root of SHASE (see also No. 102) to incite
Soso-ru	to incite; to excite
374. LI-SHEV	from the root of YASHAV (see also No. 332); a variation of the word LA-SHEVET; to sit
Suwa-ru	to sit down; to take a seat
375. LE-TABER (A)	to break
Tsubure-ru	to break; to be crushed

GROUP IX (B)

This group presents Japanese words which seem to have been formed by special inflections of Hebrew words. Such inflected words, which do not exist in the Hebrew language, are marked with an asterisk.

In addition to the inflected words, this group also presents Japanese words which have elided either the first or the last consonant of a cognate Hebrew word.

376. AKHAL — to eat; to consume
Kuu — to eat; to consume

377. AKHOR — back; backward
Kaeru — to change; to convert one thing into another

378. AKHOR — back; backward
Kaeru — to go back; to return (home)

379. ARTEL (A) — to denude; to be naked
Ratai — nudity; a naked body

380. BEITSA — an egg
Ibitsu — oval; elliptical

381. DOM — from the root DAMAM (see also No. 362); to stand still. One of the inflected forms of the word – YIDOM – means "stood still."
Yodomu — to be stagnant; to stagnate

382. DUR (A) — to lodge; to reside; to dwell. One of the inflected forms of the word – YADUR – means "he will dwell."
Yadoru — to lodge; to dwell

383. ETSEV — sadness; grief. One of the inflected forms of the word – YA'ATSOV – means "will sadden."
Yuutsu — gloom; melancholy (see also No. 384)

384. ETSEV — sadness; grief
Utsu — gloom; melancholy (see also No. 383)

385. EVRA — anger; rage; fury
Abareru — to behave violently; to rage

386. HABURA — a swelling, or a mark, produced on the skin as a result of an injury.
Kabureru — to have an eruption on the skin

387. HASA — from the root of NASA, meaning "to travel," "to move"; to transport; to convey; to lead
Hanso — conveyance (see also Nos. 388 and 389)

388. HASA — from the root of NASA (see also No. 387) to transport, to convey, to lead
Unso — conveyance; transport (see also Nos. 387 and 389)

389. HASA'A — from the root of NASA (see also No. 387); means transportation. One of the inflected forms of the word – YASA – means "has transported."
Yusoo — transportation; conveyance (see also Nos. 387 and 388)

390. HASHAK — to desire; to want
Hoshii — to desire; to want

391. HASH'ARA* — although this word does not exist in the Hebrew language, grammatically it is possible to form from the word SHI'UR, meaning "a lesson," the word HASH'ARA, meaning "giving a lesson," or "instructing."
Oshieru — to teach; to give lessons; to instruct

392. HASHEV — to reply; to answer
Oshuu — a reply; an answer

393. HASHKE — to give a person to drink
Shaku — serving a person *sake* wine

394. HEVEL — labor pains
Kaburu — to have labor pains

395. HIKAKER* — although this word does not exist in the Hebrew language, grammatically it is possible to form from the Aramaic word KOKARA (see also No. 62), meaning "a trap," the word HIKAKER, meaning "to be entrapped."

Hikkakeru — to entrap; to set a trap for

396. HOK — law; rule; custom

Ho — law; rule; regulation (see also No. 39)

397. HORA'A — teaching; instruction; giving lessons. One of the inflected forms of this word – YORE – means "will teach."

Yaru — to study; to learn (see also No. 398)

398. HORA'A — teaching; instruction

Narau — to learn; to study (see also No. 397)

399. KAFUF — to be subordinated

Kafuu — to be in a subordinate position

400. KARAV — to approach; to come close

Kuru — to approach; to draw near

401. KATEF — shoulder

Kata — shoulder

402. KATSAV (A) — to decide; to determine

Ketsu — decision

403. KAYOM — today; now; at this time

Kyoo — today; this day

404. KE'EV — pain; suffering

Ku — pain; suffering

405. MALKHUTO — literally "his kingship," is applied when referring to kings
Mikoto (H) — an ancient title applied to Japanese emperors

406. MEIR — shining; glittering; illuminating
Mei — a glitter; a sheen

407. MISA — a dialectal pronunciation of the word MITA, meaning "death"
Maiso — burial; interment

408. NAGID (H) — a title used to designate an official of the ancient Hebrew temple
Negi — a Shinto priest

409. NASA — to carry. One inflected form of this word – NOSE – means "is carrying."
Noseru — to carry

410. NAMUI* — from the root of NUM (see also No. 371); sleepy. Although this word does not exist in the Hebrew language, it is of a perfect grammatical construction.
Nemui — sleepy; drowsy

411. SAGI (A) — great; large; numerous
Sugiru — to exceed; to be more than (see also No. 412)

412. SGEI (A) — to pass; to walk
Sugiru — to pass by; to go past (see also No. 411)

413. SHA'AF — to inhale
Suu — to inhale

414. SHAVUA — a week
Shuu — a week

415.	SHAVUI	a captive; a prisoner of war
	Shuu	a prisoner
416.	SHENA	sleep
	Shin	to go to bed
417.	SHIR	a song; a poem
	Shi	poetry; a poem
418.	SHOMRON	Samaria – name of the ancient kingdom of the ten tribes of Israel. (The other Hebrew kingdom was Judah.)
	Sumera	part of the title of Japanese emperors
419.	SOF	end; termination
	Sue	the end; the close (see also No. 420)
420.	SOF	"the future"; used in such expressions as "when the end will come."
	Sue	the future (see also No. 419)
421.	UM (A)	mother
	Umu	"to mother"; to give birth; to bear
422.	YAKAD	to burn; to be on fire
	Yakedo	a burn; a scald (see also No. 423)
423.	YAKAD	to burn; to set on fire
	Yaku	to burn; to set on fire; to roast (see also No. 422)

GROUP X

This group presents Japanese words and expressions that have been formed by the combination of two Hebrew words; some of these words use the Hebrew suffix ASE – meaning "to do" – in the form ASU, OSU or SEI.

It should be pointed out that the combinations of Hebrew words presented in this group do not exist in the Hebrew language; they seem to be independent developments.

424. AKHAL KRAV — two words, of which the first, AKHAL, means "to eat" (see also No. 376), and the second, KRAV, means "battle."

Kui-kurabe — an eating contest

425. AL NOTE — two words, of which the first, AL, means "not," and the second, NOTE, means "deviating."

Antei — stability (something which does not deviate)

426. ALIL YAM — two words which may be construed as "entering sea": ALIL (A) means "entrance" (see also No. 139), and YAM means "sea" (see also No. 130).

Iriumi — a bay; a gulf

427. ARA ASE — a combination of words which can imply "arguing": ARA (A) means "to argue," and ASE, "to do."

Arasoi — a dispute; an argument

428. ASE SHEKET — a Hebrew expression, which is used today, meaning "make quiet": ASE – "make"; SHEKET – "quiet."

Seishuku — silence; quiet

429. ATS-RATS — an expression which may be used today to designate a person or a child who keeps running to and fro: ATS – "hurry"; RATS – "run"; together implying "lively."

Hatsuratsu — lively; animated

430. BLO KESHER — a Hebrew expression, used today, implying "no connection": BLO – "without"; KESHER – "connection"; "tie" (see also No. 194).

Bokkoshoo — having no connection; lack of relation

431. BO HAIL — a combination of two words which may imply "enter army": BO – "to come" or "to enter"; HAIL – "army" (see also No. 152).

Bohei — recruiting; enlistment of soldiers

432.	GARE ASE	two words implying "to irritate": GARE – "irritate," and ASE – "make."
	Jirasu	to irritate
433.	HADA MISH'OL	"one lane." HADA (A) – "one"; MISH'OL – "lane"; "way" (see also No. 197).
	Katamichi	one way
434.	HADA MUKH	"one low," which can be construed as "one side lower" or "inclined": HADA (A) – "one"; MUKH – "low."
	Katamuku	to incline; to tilt (see also No. 435)
435.	HADA YARAD	"one down," which can be construed as "one side down" or "inclined": HADA (A) – "one"; YARAD – "go down."
	Katayoru	to incline (see also No. 434)
436.	HALUKA SEDER	in a reversed order – SEDER HALUKA – it is a common Hebrew expression meaning "distribution order": HALUKA – "distribution"; SEDER – "order" (see also No. 289).
	Haikyu-seido	distribution system
437.	HARAV ASE	"make destruction": HARAV – "to destroy" (see also No. 29); ASE – "to do."
	Horobosu	to ruin; to destroy
438.	HAVAT HAKE	two words in which HAVAT means "to strike" and HAKE means "to beat" (see also No. 26).
	Habataku	to flap; to beat the wings
439.	HESHEK GARE	"irritate the desire" or "evoke a desire": HESHEK – "desire" (see also No. 390), and GARE – "to irritate"; "evoke."
	Hoshigaru	to crave for; to desire; to want

440. HEZEK HASHEM	a Hebrew expression, literally meaning "injury to name," and can be construed as "insult": HEZEK – "injury" or "damage"; HASHEM – "the name."
Hazukashime	insult; humiliation
441. HOK ASE	literally "make law": HOK – "law" (see also No. 396), ASE – "to make."
Hosei	laws; legislation
442. I HOKI	unlawful: I – "not," and HOKI – "lawful."
Iho	illegality; unlawfulness (see also Nos. 39 and 396)
443. I HOKI ASE	"make illegal": I HOKI – "illegal" (see also No. 442), and ASE – "make."
Ihosei	illegality (see also Nos. 39 and 396)
444. ISHA TSAHEK	literally "woman play," which can be construed as "flirting with a woman": ISHA – "woman," and TSAHEK – "play."
Ichatsuku	to flirt with (a girl)
445. KAHEL HAIL	literally "to gather an army"; but it can also be construed as "mobilization": KAHEL – "to gather" (see also No. 163), and HAIL – "army" (see also No. 148).
Kaihei	conscription
446. KAL HAIL	"small army": KAL – "light" or "small"; HAIL – "army" (see also No. 148).
Kahei	a small army
447. KALA ASE	literally "to make an end"; it is often used in the sense of "to destroy": KALA – "end" (see also No. 165); ASE – "to make."
Karasu	to kill; to destroy

448. KAMA ALAL — "to bring in the harvested cereals": KAMA – "cereals" (see also No. 47), and ALAL (A) – "to gather and bring in the harvest" (see also No. 136).

Kamaire — harvesting; gathering in the crops

449. KAR ASE — "to make cold": KAR – "cold" (the same as KOR, No. 65), and ASE – "to make."

Karasu — to get hoarse – through a cold. Similar to *Kareru* (see No. 52)

450. KETA SHALAKH — "cutting throwing": KETA – "a cutting" and SHALAKH – "to throw."

Katashiro — paper cuttings thrown into the sea or a river in a ceremony of purification. The Hebrews perform a similar purification ceremony by symbolically emptying their pockets and "throwing" the sins into the sea. However, while the Japanese perform the *katashiro* ceremony on the last day of the sixth month, the Hebrews perform their TASHLIKH – throwing the sins into the sea (from the same root as SHALAKH) – on the first day of the seventh month (Hebrew calendar).

451. KI IWASERU — is a Hebrew sentence meaning "when it will be announced," while waiting, of course, for an important event to happen. KI – "when," and IWASERU – "will be announced."

Ki-awaseru — happen to come; come by chance

452. KINA SHAMA — can be construed as "loud lamentation": KINA – "lamentation" (the substantive of KONEN, No. 63), and SHIMA – "to cause to be heard." In the Hebrew tradition, most lamentations are loud. They are particularly loud when lamenting the death of a relative.

Kanashimu — to lament a person's death

453. KLA GLOME — "to plait reeds": KLA – "to plait," and GOME – "reeds," "bulrush" or "papyrus" (see also No. 312).

Kagome — woven bamboo pattern

454. KOL KORE — literally "a calling voice," it is used idiomatically to imply "proclamation," or "official announcement": KOL – "voice" (see also No. 174), and KORE – "calling."

Kakurei — a Cabinet decree (order)

455. KOR ASE — "to make cold": KOR – "cold" (see also Nos. 52, 64, 65 and 449), and ASE – "to make."

Korasu — to freeze; to refrigerate

456. KRA HAIL — literally, "to call an army": KRA – "to call," and HAIL – "army" (see also Nos. 148, 431 and 446).

Kyohei — raising an army

457. LEIL BA — literally "coming at night": LEIL – the construct form of LAIL, meaning "night," and BA – "coming" (the same as BO, in No. 431).

Yobai — to visit a woman under the cover of night

458. MA'AGAL ASE — "make a circle": MA'AGAL – "circle"; ASE – "to make."

Megurasu — to encircle; to enclose

459. MA'AGAL ASE — "make a circle," in the sense of altering the course (see also No. 458).

Magirasu — to divert; to evade

460. MABAT TAKA — in the reverse order – TAKA MABAT – this expression is still used in the Hebrew language with the meaning of "cast a glance" or "insert a look": TAKA – "to insert," and MABAT – "a look," or "a glance."

Mabataki — a blink; a wink

461. MAKA ASE — literally "make a beat": MAKA – "a beat" (the substantive of HAKE – "to beat," No. 26), and ASE – "to do."

Makasu — to beat; to defeat

462. MAR'E SHAKUF — "transparent sight": MAR'E – "sight"; SHAKUF – "transparent."

Mie-suku — be easily seen through; be transparent

463. MAI GALAL — "roll (into) water": MAI – "water"; GALAL – "roll."

Moguru — to dive into water – which is, in effect, a rolling-over action, to enable the diver to plunge head first into the water.

464. MEULE ISH — in a reversed order – ISH MEULE – it is a common Hebrew expression meaning "a prominent man": ISH – "man," and MEULE – "prominent."

Meishi — a man of distinction; a prominent man

465. MI GADOL — "he who (is) prominent": MI – "he who," and GADOL – "prominent"; "great"; "big" (see also Nos. 293, 294 and 295).

Mikado — an epithet of distinction applied to the emperor of Japan

466. MISA KTAVA — "death writing": MISA – a dialectal pronunciation of the word MITA – meaning "death" (see also No. 407), and KTAVA – meaning "writing."

Maiso kotoba — actually, "*maiso-no-kotoba*," is a prayer recited during a burial ceremony; it is often read from a written document.

467. MISA SAGAR — "to enclose the dead": MISA – a dialectal pronunciation of the Aramaic word MITA – meaning "a dead person" or "a corpse," and SAGAR – "to enclose."

Misasagi (H) — an enclosure containing a specially formed

mound that used to be heaped over the graves of ancient Japanese emperors. The *misasagi* is also called *goryo*, which may be a slight corruption of the Aramaic word GOLELA – meaning "the stone placed on top of a burial cave."

468. MTIN AGUM — "grieving waiting": MTIN (A) – "to wait," and AGUM – from the same root as AGAM – meaning "sad"; "grieving" (see also No. 1).

Machi-agumi — to grow tired of waiting

469. MTIN HAKITS — "waiting awake": MTIN (A) – "to wait" (see also No. 468), and HAKITS – "awake."

Machi-akasu — to wait the whole night

470. NA ASE — a polite expression meaning "please do"

Nasai — a polite expression meaning "please do"

471. ORA SISA — a combination of two words used idiomatically to imply great joy: ORA – "brightness" or "light," and SISA – "joy." A similar expression – ORA (VE) SIMHA – also meaning "great joy," is found in the Hebrew version of the Bible.

Ureshisa — joy; gladness

472. PAGUA NASHA — "an afflicted person": PAGUA – "afflicted," and NASHA (A) – "person."

Fugusha — a disabled person; a cripple

473. PUHA NAKI — literally "clean breath": PUHA (A) – "breath," and NAKI – "clean."

Fukinuki — ventilation

474. PUHA SHEKA — literally "wind depression": PUHA (A) – "wind," "breath," and SHEKA – "depression."

Fushoku — wind erosion

475. PUKA HAIL — "obstacle troops": PUKA – "obstacle," and HAIL – "army"; "troops" (see also Nos. 148, 431, 445 and 446).

Fukuhei — troops in ambush

476. PUKA SHUHA — "an obstacle trench" or "an obstacle pit": PUKA – "obstacle," and SHUHA – "pit" or "trench."

Fukusha — a sheltered trench

477. RAZE IDA — "a thin hand": RAZE – "thin" or "lean," and IDA (A) – "hand."

Yase-ude — a thin arm

478. RE'E U NSE — an expression meaning "look and try"; it can be used of course when referring to people who undergo training. RE'E – "look"; U – "and"; NSE – same as NASE (No. 87), meaning "try."

Rensei — training; drilling

479. RENA GALE — "to disclose the thinking": RENA (or RNA) – is an Aramaic word meaning "to think," and GALE – "to disclose" or "to reveal."

Ronjiru — to discuss; to argue; to dispute

480. RUAH BO — literally "wind come," which may be construed as "bringing in wind": RUAH – "wind," and BO – "to come" or "to enter" (see also No. 431).

Reibo — air conditioning

481. RUAH HAR — "spirit (of) mountain": RUAH – "wind" or "spirit"; HAR – "mountain."

Reihoo — a sacred mountain – where a spirit dwells

482. SHAHA HAIL — "to stay troops": SHAHA – "to dwell" or "to stay"; HAIL – "army"; "troops."

Chuuhei — stationing troops

483. SHAKA ASE — "to make sinking": SHAKA – "to sink," and ASE – "to make."

Sakusei — well sinking

484. SHALAK YAKAD — "to set on fire to boil," in contrast of "to set on fire to broil": SHALA – "to boil," and YAKAD – "to set on fire" (see also Nos. 422 and 423).

Sukiyaki — a specially prepared Japanese meal consisting of boiled beef and vegetables.

485. SHEKHAR KDERA — "pot for wine": KDERA – "pot," and SHEKHAR – "wine."

Sakadaru — a wine cask; a wine keg

486. SIYUM ASE — "make an end": SIYUM – "end" or "termination" (see also Nos. 114 and 224), and ASE – "to do."

Sumasu — to make an end of; to finish

487. TABEL SAGI — "to eat much": TABEL (A) – "to eat" (see also No. 187), and SAGI (A) – "much"; "greatly" (see also No. 411).

Tabesugi — eating too much; excessive eating. It is interesting to note here that there is an Aramaic word – TAVOZIG – meaning "a picnic of young men," where, usually, everyone eats much.

488. TAHAT HAR (H) — Tahat Mountain. The national history of the Hebrews begins with the exodus from Egypt and a long journey to conquer the land given by God to their ancestors – the land of Canaan (Israel). In the course of this journey, the Hebrews encamped at a place called Tahat (Num. 33:26); but the Bible does not tell us whether this place was a mountain.

Takachi-ho (H) — a historical place-name. The national history of the Japanese begins with a journey to conquer the land that the deities had given to their ancestors.

This journey started from a place called Takachi-ho (*Kojiki*, ch. 47, and *Nihon-Shoki*, bk. 3). Having seen how the *h* of Hebrew words changes into a *k* in Japanese words (Group 4 (b)); and having seen how the Hebrew word HAR becomes *Ho* in Japanese (see No. 481), it is not impossible to see in the Japanese place-name Takachi-ho the Hebrew origin of Tahat (mountain).

489. TALUI EDEN — "hanging pedestal": TALUI – "hanging," and EDEN – "pedestal."

Tsuridana — a hanging shelf

490. TEUFA ASE — "make flight": TEUFA – "flight" or "to fly," and ASE – "to make."

Tobasu — to fly; to make fly

491. TEURA ASE — "make illumination": TEURA – "illumination" (see also No. 120), and ASE – "to make."

Terasu — to shine; to illuminate. The Sun Goddess of Japanese mythology is called Amaterasu, meaning "Heaven Illuminating."

492. TSE ASE — "to make expenditure." From the same root as the Hebrew word HOTSA'A – meaning "expense," TSE – literally meaning "come out," may be construed as "expenditure."

Tsuiyasu — spend; expend

493. TSE PUHA — literally "come out wind": TSE – "come out," and PUHA (A) – "wind."

Tsufuu — ventilation; airing (see another word for ventilation in No. 473)

494. TUM AGAR — literally "to fill up and accumulate": TUM (A) – "to fill up," and AGAR – "to accumulate."

Tsumi-ageru — to accumulate; to make a pile

495. USHA BOR	"fortification trench": USHA (A) – "fortification," and BOR – "pit"; "trench."
Uchibori	a moat within castle walls
496. YASHAV	the root YASHAV, literally meaning "to sit," has many implications in Hebrew. Thus, for example, YASHAV, as a contracted form of YASHAV-SHIV'A, may imply "to mourn".
Yushuu	lamentation; grief
497. YASHAV	to sit, may imply "to sit in prison" or "imprisonment."
Yushuu	imprisonment
498. YISHUV	from the same root as YASHAV, means "the people."
Yushuu	the people
499. YAVO KOL	"call to come": YAVO – "will come," and KOL – "voice"; "sound"; "call" (see also No. 174).
Yobigoe	a call; a cry
500. ZUGA TEURA	"glass illumination," or "illumination through glass": ZUGA (A) – "glass," and TEURA – "illumination" (see also Nos. 120 and 491).
Suki-tooru	to be transparent; to be seen through

Chapter seven

Gathering Some Gleanings

Whenever similar words are found in two seemingly unrelated languages, it is a natural tendency to attribute the similarity to coincidence. But "coincidence" is not clever, for it selects its samples blindly; and this chapter will try to show that some of the similarities between Hebrew and Japanese words are just too "clever" to be attributed to coincidence. This will be done by slightly modifying the grouping of words presented in the previous chapter, and showing how different Japanese words have originated from *the same* Hebrew root. The following, in a non-alphabetical order, are a few examples.

As a first example, we will take the Hebrew root GADAL, meaning "to make big," and examine both its Hebrew and Japanese derivatives.

GADAL	to make big; to magnify; to increase
Kodai	exaggeration; magnification
GADOL	from the same root as GADAL, means "big"; "vast"; "immense"
Kodai	with the suffix *-na*, means "vast"; "extensive"; "immense"

GADOL	from the same root as GADAL, means "big"; "great"; "exalted." The Hebrew Bible uses the word GADOL as an epithet to describe the greatness of King Solomon (1 Kings, 10:23).
Kodai	with the suffix *-na*, implies "grand"; "sublime"; "excellent"
MI GADOL	is an expression of two words meaning "he who is exalted" or "he who is great"
Mikado	the exalted Emperor of Japan. The same epithet, in effect, as that used for King Solomon!

Another Hebrew root from which several Japanese words have been formed is the word KOR, meaning "cold."

KOR	cold
Kori	ice
KARA	from the same root as KOR, means "intensive cold" or "frost"
Koru	to freeze
KOR ASE	literally, "to make cold"
Korasu	to freeze
KARER	from the root of KOR, means "to cool" or "to catch a cold"
Kareru	to become hoarse – a result of catching a cold
KOR ASA	literally, "has been done by cold"
Karasu	to get hoarse – a result of catching a cold

The Hebrew word HOK, meaning "law," has also left several vestiges in the Japanese language. Thus:

HOK	law; rule; principle
Ho	law; rule; principle

HUKI	from the same root as HOK, means "lawful"
Hoki	laws and regulations; legislation
I HUKI	is a combination of two words, meaning "unlawful"
Iho	illegality; unlawfulness
HOK ASE	literally, "make law"
Hosei	laws; legislation
I HUKI ASE	literally, "make unlawful"
Ihosei	illegality; unlawfulness
HOKAN*	a combination of the word HOK and the suffix *-an*, may mean "judge" or "lawyer" (see No. 40 in chapter 6).
Hokan	a judge; a judicial officer

Another way to show that the similarity of certain words in two unrelated languages is not the result of coincidence is to discover similar synonyms in the two languages. For even if "coincidence" did somehow manage to create two similar words in two unrelated languages, there is practically no way in which it could "by chance" form similar synonyms. Hence, the fact that the Japanese language contains quite a few Hebrew synonyms, cannot be attributed to coincidence. Thus, for example:

AVAR	means "end"; "termination"; "finish"; "past"
Owari	an end; a termination; a finish
SIYUMA	is an Aramaic word meaning "conclusion"; "finishing"
Shimau	to finish; to conclude
MOTSA	literally meaning "exit," is used idiomatically to imply "the exit of a period" or "the end of a period." Thus, for example, MOTSA SHAVUA means "weekend."
Matsu	is a suffix, usually used to designate "the end" of a period. Thus, for example, *Shumatsu* (*Shuu-matsu*) means "weekend."

KALA	literally meaning "to cease"; "to end"; "to finish," and "to destroy," is often used to designate the end of a period, and particularly the end of a year.
Kure	the end of the year
KALA ASE	literally meaning "to end," is sometimes used with the implication of "to destroy."
Karasu	to kill; to destroy

Another group of Hebrew words, words that imply "trouble"; "distress"; "sorrow" and "grief," though not exactly synonyms, is also very well represented in the Japanese language. Thus:

TSARA	anguish; trouble; distress
Tsurai	heartbreaking; cruel; painful
TSUKA	trouble; anguish; distress
Tsuku	anguish; agony; pain
METSAR	trouble; suffering; difficulty
Motsure	trouble; complication; difficulty

The ancient relationship between the Japanese and the Hebrews can also be seen in some inflected forms of Hebrew words that are still found in the Japanese language. Thus, for example:

KOKARA	is an Aramaic word meaning "a trap"
Kakaru	to fall into a trap
HIKAKER	is an inflected form of KOKARA, meaning "to become entrapped"
Hikkakeru	to entrap

To conclude this chapter, I want to direct the reader's attention to what seems to be a strange historical coincidence.

In 444 B.C.E., when the descendants of the Hebrews who had been exiled to Babylonia[1] returned to Jerusalem and decided to revive the

Hebrew law in the country, they spoke about it to Ezra. "And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation...upon the first day of the seventh month the Hebrew New Year...And they found written in the law...that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month the feast of tabernacles."[2]

A similar event took place in Japan in 645 C.E. when the leaders of the Taikuwa reform decided to begin a new era in the country, they declared it on the first day of the seventh month – the Hebrew New Year – and on the fourteenth day of the seventh month – coinciding with the date on which the feast of Tabernacles should be celebrated – they brought offerings to Shinto gods; very similar to what the Hebrews in Jerusalem had done more than one thousand years before them!

Should the close similarity between the two historical events be attributed to coincidence, or were the Shinto priests of the Taikuwa era just following an ancient Hebrew tradition of declaring the beginning of a new era on the first day of the seventh month?

Notes and References

Chapter I

1. 2 Kings 17:5–6.
2. *Nihon-Shoki* (also *Nihongi*), vol. 1, bk. 3, 113.
3. *Nihongi*, vol. 1, bk. 3, 124, n.
4. The Yevusi, one of the tribes that had inhabited the land of Canaan during its conquest by the Hebrews, is mentioned several times in the Bible, as in Genesis 15:21, or Joshua 15:8. They are called "Jebusites" in the English version of the Bible.
5. *Nihongi*, vol. 1, bk. 5, 161.
6. "Seir" and "Edom" are often mentioned in the Bible together. Thus, for instance, "And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom" (Gen. 32:3).
7. *Kojiki* bk. 2, chap. 67, 206–7.
8. Yevus was the ancient name of Jerusalem. Before its capture by King David, it was inhabited by the Yevusi tribe – see note 4 of this chapter.
9. *Nihongi*, vol. 1, bk. 6, 183.
10. 1 Kings 3:14.
11. *Nihongi*, vol. 1, bk. 6, 177.

Chapter II

1. E.M. Satow, "Ancient Japanese Rituals," *Asiatic Society of Japan*, Tranactions (1879): vol.7, pt.2, 412.

2. W.G. Aston, *Shinto: The Ancient Religion of Japan* (London: Constable and Company, 1921), 6.
3. Based on personal observations while serving as a novice at a Shinto shrine.
4. M. Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion* (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1963), 33.
5. *Norito, A New Translation of the Ancient Japanese Ritual Prayers*, trans. Donald L. Philippi (Tokyo: Kokvgakuin University, 1959), 46–9.
6. Aston, *Shinto: The Way of the Gods*, 101. Although according to some traditions it was the Dread Female of Heaven (Uzume) who uttered these divine vocables – it is more reasonable to assume that it was the Heavenly Koyane.
7. *Nihongi*, vol. 1, 49.
8. The Book of Leviticus mentions the sins of incest in 18:6–20, and the sin of "double planting" in 19:19.
9. Aramaic was extensively used by the ancient Hebrews at different periods of their history. It is still used in certain prayers.
10. *Nihongi*, vol. 1, 13.
11. One example is found in the Book of Deuteronomy, 14:2.
12. 2 Kings 23:11.
13. From a pamphlet on the Grand Shrine of Ise.

Chapter III

1. *Nihongi*, vol. 2, bk. 22, 128–33.
2. *Nihongi*, vol. 2, bk. 25, 197–200.
3. The Taikuwa era is sometimes designated also as "Taikwa," "Taika" and "Daika."
4. *Nihongi*, vol. 2, bk. 25, 195.
5. "Torah" is the sacred "Law" of the Hebrews. It is usually handwritten on parchment, and is kept in the form of a scroll.
6. I.J. Gelb, *A Study of Writing*. Rev. ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 185-87. Canaan is the ancient name of the land of Israel.
7. *Nihongi*, vol. 1, bk. 16, 399.
8. Exodus 32:16.
9. 2 Kings 22:8.

Chapter IV

1. 1 Sam. 8:4–5.
2. 2 Sam. 5:3.
3. 1 Kings 2:11.
4. 1 Kings 5:14.
5. Abridged from the *Annals of Sargon*
6. W. Keller, *The Bible as History*, trans. William Neil (New York: Banram Books, 1974), 286.
7. 1 Chr. 5:26.
8. See the article on the "Book of Chronicles," in Charles M. Laymon. Ed., *The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible* (London: William Collins Sons and Co., Ltd, 1972)
9. J. Flavius, *Antiquities of the Jews*, bk. 11, ch. 5, sec. 2.
10. Esdras II is an apocryphal book, found in some Bibles as an appendix to the Old Testament.
11. H.W. Bellew, *Journal of a Political Mission to Afghanistan in 1857* (London: Smith, Elderard Co, 1862), 46.
12. Based on Bellew, *Journal,* 48.
13. Ezra 7:9.
14. The name Khallakh, or Khallukh, is mentioned in the book *Hudud-al-Alam*, written by an anonymous Persian geographer in 982 C.E., and found in Bukhara in 1892.
15. Since the Ten Tribes of Israel had been deported in 721 B.C.E., and the book of Esdras II describes a situation existing in about 90 C.E., it seems, therefore, that the ancient Hebrews lived in Arzareth (Hazarajat), Halah (Khallakh) and Habor (Khyber) for more than eight hundred years after their exile from Samaria.
16. The Khalkha tribes, who may have inhabited Khallakh in the past, dwell in Mongolia today.
17. S. Hedin, *Central Asia and Tibet* (London: Hurst and Blackett, Ltd, 1903), v. 1, 243.
18. E. Huntington, *The Pulse of Asia* (Boston: Houghron Mifflin Company, 1907), 188.
19. M.A. Stein, *Ruins of Desert Cathay* (New York: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1968), *v.* 1, 382.
20. William White, in his book *Chinese Jews*, says that according to

inscriptions found in Kaifeng, the first Jews reached China during the Han Dynasty (p. 31), sometime between 206 B.C.E. and 221 C.E. Later generations of the Chinese Jews, who had Mongolian features, did not know either from what place their ancestors had come to Kaifeng, or whether they were part of the Ten Tribes of Israel. The community of the Chinese Jews, now expired, existed until a few decades ago.

21. That the people of Yamato had been in Korea before reaching the islands of Japan, may be evidenced, perhaps, by the many Yasaka beads found there.
22. Could it be that the name "Takla Makan" is a slight corruption of the Hebrew-Aramaic expression "Tikla Makom" – meaning "Ruined Place?"

Chapter v

1. Gen. 10:5.
2. Sir W. Jones, "Third Anniversary Discourse, 1786," *Asiatick Researches* (1788), vol. 1, 415-31.
3. H. Kindaichi, *The Japanese Language*, trans. Umeyo Hirano (Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, Inc., 1978), 33.
4. A.L. Kroeber, *Anthropology* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1923), 90.
5. Although there is no universally accepted definition of "language," most linguists would agree to this definition.
6. Kindaichi, *The Japanese Language*, 109.
7. These figures, given in rounded off numbers, are based on the following computations: The number of disyllabic and trisyllabic words that it is possible to form with 112 different syllables is (112 × 111) and (112 × 111 × 110) respectively; and the probability that the speakers of two unrelated languages, having the same number and type of syllables, is (112 × 111) × (112 × 111) and (112 × 111 × 110) × (112 × 111 × 110) respectively.
8. Engi-Shiki, *Procedures of the Engi Era*, trans. Felicia Gressitt Bock (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1970), n. 359.
9. Called Wadi Zerka today. The name Iabok, and the struggle of the Hebrew patriarch Jacob with a deity (angel) are mentioned in Genesis, 32:22–28.
10. *Nihongi* (Aston), Vol. 1, pp. 208–210.

11. Num. 21:29. Kemosh is sometimes spelt "Chemosh."
12. The story of Ehud and the King of the Kemoshi (Moab) is told in Judges, 3:16–30.
13. The story of Prince Yamato-Dake and the leader of the Kumaso is told in the *Nihongi*, vol. 1, 200–01.
14. Lev. 2:2.
15. Obad. 1:1–3.
16. *Nihongi*, vol. 1, 129, n.

Chapter VI

1. Verses 5–6 in chapter 12 of Judges describe how the tribe of Ephraim was unable to pronounce the sound *sh*, and pronounced "*sibboleth*" instead of "*shibboleth*."
2. Syriac is an eastern dialect of the Aramaic language.

Chapter VII

1. The exile of the Hebrews from the kingdom of Judah to Babylonia took place in 586 B.C.E., after the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem by the Babylonian army.
2. A detailed description of the event can be found in Nehemia, chapter 8.

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A Japanese Sailor's Song

In the following song, sung by the sailors of the town of Noshiro, the words in italic have no meaning in Japanese.

In the English translation of the song, the meaningless words that appear in the original Japanese song, are printed in italic.

Noshiro Funakata Bushi	Noshiro's Sailor Song
Yasa-hoo-eesaa *Nosaa-enya-rahoo-enya* *Haaenyaa-ho-esa*	*Yasa-hoo-eesaa* *Nosaa-enya-rahoo-enya* *Haaenyaa-ho-esa*
Noshiro bashi kara *Haaenyaa-ho-esa*	From the bridge of Noshiro *Haaenya-ho-esa*
Oki Nagamore ba *Haaenyau-ho-esa*	Looking at the open sea *Haaenyau-ho-esa*
San ju go tan no ho maite Yoneshiro gawa ni iru toki Oki-na koe o ba hari agete	Rolling up the big sail When entering the Yoneshiro river Raising proudly our voice
Ho-rahoo-esaa, nosaa-enya *Rahoo-enya, haaenyaa-ho-esa*	*Ho-rahoo-esaa, nosaa-enya* *Rahoo-enya, haaenyaa-ho-esa*

Omoi-dasha funanori ee	We will not forget that we
Tomareranu	Are sailors
Haaenyaa-ho-esa	*Haaenyaa-ho-esa*

Although it is quite unusual for a folk song to contain such a large proportion of strange meaningless vocables among its words, the mystery can be easily solved. For the strange vocables of "Noshiro's Sailor Song," though slightly corrupted, as shown by the following comparison, are, in effect, Hebrew words related to the sailing of a boat!

The meaningless vocables of the Japanese song are printed in italics, and their equivalents in capital letters.

Table of Comparison	Meaning of the Hebrew Words
Yasa-hoo-eesaa	
ESA HOO ESA	I will sail hoo, I will sail
Nosaa-enya-rahoo-enya	
NOSAAT ONIYA, RAHOK ONIYA	Sailing is the boat, far is the boat
Haaenyaa-ho-esa	
BAONIYA HO ESA	I will sail ho in the boat
Ho-rahoo-esaa, nosaa-enya	
HO RAHOK ESA, NOSAAT ONIYA	I will sail afar ho, the boat sails
Rahoo-enya, haaenyaa-ho-esa	
RAHOK ONIYA, BAONIYA HO ESA	Far is the boat, I am in the boat

Writing now the English translation of the song, and substituting, for the meaningless vocables the Hebrew words, we have the following:

Noshiro's Sailor Song

I WILL SAIL HOO, I WILL SAIL
SAILING IS THE BOAT, FAR IS THE BOAT
I WILL SAIL HO IN THE BOAT

From the bridge of Noshiro
I WILL SAIL HO IN THE BOAT

Looking at the open sea
I WILL SAIL HO IN THE BOAT

Rolling up the big sail
When entering the Yoneshiro river
Raising proudly our voice
I WILL SAIL AFAR HO, THE BOAT SAILS
FAR IS THE BOAT, I AM IN THE BOAT
We will not forget that we
Are sailors

I WILL SAIL HO IN THE BOAT

שיר מלחים יפאני

מגשרה של נושירו
נסתכל למרחקים
ובשובנו לנהר יונשירו
נקפל המפרשים
בגאוה נרים קולנו
ולא נשכח שאנחנו מלחים
* * *
יַסַא-הוֹ-אֶסַאַא
נוֹסַאַא-אֶניָה-רַהוֹו-אֶניָה
הַאַאַאֶניָהַה-הוֹ-אֶסַא
ולא נכחי שאנחנו מלחים
נוֹשִׁירו בָּאשִׁי קַרַה
הַאַאַאֶניָה-הוֹ-אֶסַא
אוֹקי נַגַמוּרַה בָּה
הַאַאַאֶניָה-הוֹ-אֶסַא
סַן ג׳וּ גוֹ תַן נוֹ הוֹ מַאיטָה
יוֹנְשִׁירוֹ גָוָוה נִי יִרוּ טוֹקי
אוֹקי-נַה קוֹאָ אוֹ בָּה הַארִי אָגָטָה
הוֹ-רַהוֹו-אֶסַאא, נוֹסַאַא-אֶניָה
רַהוֹו-אֶניָה, הַאַאַאֶניָה- הוֹ-אֶסַא
אוֹמוֹי-דַאשָׁה פוּנָנוֹרי אָא סוֹמָרַנוּ
הַאַאַאֶניָהַ-הוֹ-אֶסַא

אסע הו אסע
נוסעת אניה, רחוק אניה
באניה הו אסע
מגשרה של נושירו
באניה הו אסע
נסתכל למרחקים
באניה הו אסע
ובשובנו לנהר יונשירו
נקפל המפרשים
בגאוה נרים קולנו
הו רחוק אסע! נוסעת אניה
רחוק אניה, באניה הו אסע
ולא נשכח שאנחנו מלחים
באניה הו אסע

THE BOOK THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

This book will open the eyes of its readers, as it opened my eyes about fifteen years ago, and changed my life. The Hebrew origin of the Japanese language and the Japanese people will, as Joseph Eidelberg asserts, enlighten the research on the Lost Tribes of Israel. Beginning with my reading of his book, I have undertaken intensive study of the subject and am now convinced that many of the Israelites traveled to the east along the Silk Road, finally coming to ancient Japan and influencing Japanese culture and traditions.

Arimasa Kubo

Translator of the Japanese Edition

Chief Writer and President of Remnant Publishing in Japan

The mysterious origins and distant past of the Japanese people are unveiled in this fascinating story that uncovers the journey of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel through far away lands, ending in the Far East.

The late Josheph Eidelberg, who authored the book, embarked on analyzing the similarity of ancient Hebrew and Japanese traditions, religious ceremonies, historical names; including haiku poems, Kana writings and Japanese folk songs. In a systematic way the author has also originated 10 innovative ground rules of exchanging sounds, vowels and letters, which unfolded into a fascinating discovery of thousands of words with similar pronunciations, sounds and translations between Hebrew and Japanese.

The original book was published in English and translated to Japanese in 1980, with over 40,000 copies sold. For the first time, the complete theory has finally been consolidated for the entire world to read.

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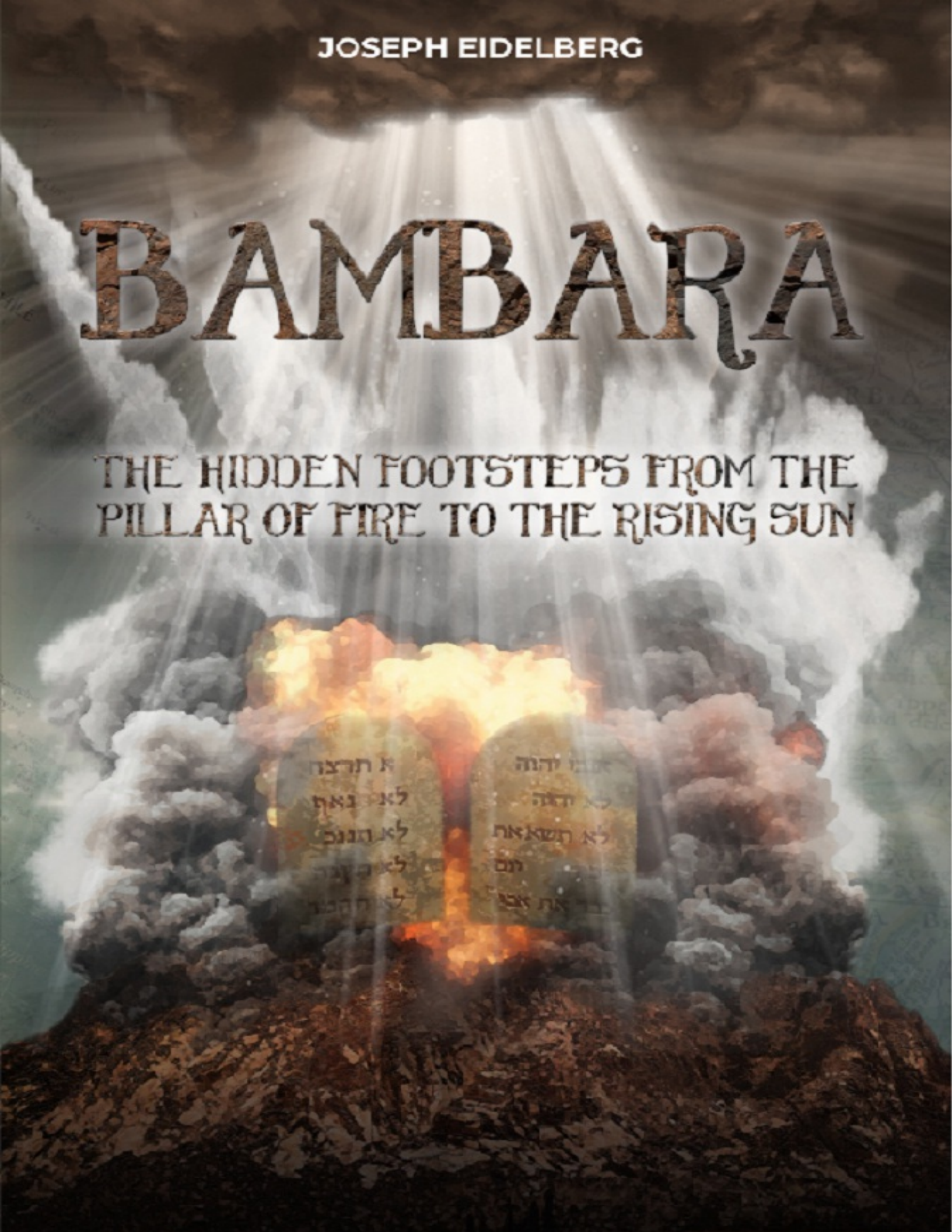
JOSEPH EIDELBERG

BAMBARA

THE HIDDEN FOOTSTEPS FROM THE PILLAR OF FIRE TO THE RISING SUN



Joseph Eidelberg

BAMBARA

Uncovering
The Hidden Footsteps From the Pillar of Fire to the Rising Sun

Translation by Boaz E. Eidelberg, Ph.D.
To Liam and Maya in Commemoration of their great- Grandfather Joseph Eidelberg

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Preface

While studying African languages, the author discovered to his surprise that the Bambara tribe, which resides in Mali, is speaking “Ancient Hebrew” and eats “Manna” every day. While trying to explore how the Hebrew language reached West Africa, he found out that the names of many sites in Africa were mentioned in the Bible and are on the route of the Hebrews from Egypt to Canaan. Hence, he concluded that most of their wanderings “in the Desert” the Hebrews spent in Africa.

*

Some five centuries after the Hebrews arrived in Canaan, the “Ten Tribes” were exiled. But they did not get lost. The fact that in the language of the Japanese people, there are many words that survived from both the Hebrew language and the Bambara language, led the author to conclude that the Bambara tribe serves as a “connecting link” between the Israelites and the Japanese.

In Loving Memory of Joseph Eidelberg

My first meeting with Major Joseph (Yoske) Eidelberg occurred in the early 1950s in the Battalion Commanders' College of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). Both of us were majors; Yoske represented the Engineers Corps while I came from Infantry. We attended the same class and developed a friendship that lasted until his death.

Yoske possessed many important values: He had a smart, creative mind, a broad spectrum of interests, a natural sense of humor, and a benevolent character. He also combined being an excellent practical manager with being an original and creative thinker.

After his retirement from the IDF, he successfully served as manager and industrial engineer, respectively, of two of the most important industrial enterprises in Israel—the potash, bromide, and magnesium industries in the Dead Sea and the main shipyard industries in Haifa.

But Yoske was not just an efficient technological manager. He also developed deep interest in the Bible and other ancient historical sources, gradually developing new theories about important historical events. Two of his theories have been published already: one deals with the ancient Hebrew Exodus from Egypt and the other with expulsion of the Ten Tribes from the Holy Land by the Assyrians.

Regarding the Exodus, Yoske published a thesis claiming that Moses led the Israelites from Egypt to the Holy Land, not through Sinai, but by a long voyage (40 years) through the Sahara in North Africa, turning back eastwards, crossing the strait of Bab el Mandab to Yemen, and from there northwards to the Holy Land.

Yoske's second thesis dealt with the disappearance of the Ten Tribes after their expulsion by the Assyrians. After becoming acquainted with the Japanese language, this led him to believe that at least a portion of the Ten Tribes reached East Asia, inserting some fragments of Jewish culture and language there. I understand that some academic Japanese circles would like to pursue this further. In any case, Yoske was the first one to see a possible connection.

So this is (not "was") Yoske Eidelberg, an army officer, a friend, an excellent industrial manager, and an original, creative scholar.

– Colonel (ret.) Meir Pa’il, Ph.D.

Chapter 1

The Hobby

It was a rainy autumn morning, and the small motorboat heavily plowed its way. The fragments of waves that shattered into the sides of the boat, and the cold wind that blew onboard, brought the few passengers to huddle in the back around a small table that stood near the machine room. The chilly morning weather reflected on the passengers a silent atmosphere, where each huddled in his corner, immersed in reflection and little speech. There were three monks with full beard-and-hair, dressed in their black robes; a merchant from Athens, whose unshaven face expressed a deep concern; a Catholic priest of Russian descent, dressed as a civilian; and me.

The boat sailed to Athos, a monks' republic founded about 1,000 years ago on the Chalkidiki Peninsula in northeastern Greece. It has several dozen monasteries dedicated to men who decided to devote their lives to God's work, and since its founding no woman has set foot in it. Each person, of the few passengers on the boat, had a special purpose in Athos. The monks returned to their monasteries from shopping in the city; the Athenian merchant went there for communion and prayer in one of the monasteries; the Catholic priest, who spoke English with a heavy Russian accent and was probably neither a priest nor a Catholic, went to peruse ancient manuscripts found in the monastery libraries; and I went there to see and try to understand, why people decide to devote their entire lives to prayer.

At the end of the cruise, which lasted several hours, we arrived at the pier, which served as a port. An old bus, which squirted down the narrow roads, brought us to the city of Kariai, which is the administrative center for all monasteries in Athos. After presenting a special license, which I received in Athens, I was given a large certificate, which credits me for visiting every monastery, and receiving food with a place to stay. I chose to visit and stay in the two Russian monasteries on the peninsula.

I arrived in the early afternoon at the first monastery, near Kariai, and went into a big courtyard surrounded by buildings. From a far distance I saw

a tall monk, about 80 years old, crossing in wide, fast, steps across the courtyard. I went towards him, apologized for the disturbance, and asked him in Russian if I could visit the monastery church. He was happy to know that I was from Israel, because when he was young, he spent several years in a Russian monastery in Jerusalem. He regretted that he was not available to show me the church but promised to send the boy to open it so that I could visit it. After walking around the yard for about ten minutes, I saw an old monk limping towards the church. I did not pay attention to him as I was waiting for the boy who was supposed to arrive. But the old man approached me and asked me if I was the one who wanted to visit the church. I was surprised to see a boy about 70 years old, but apparently the time at Athos stands still. The first monk I met had been in the monastery for 50 years, and the "boy," who was about ten years younger than him, had been in the monastery for only 45 years, and had been a teenager ever since.

The church was impressively developed in its paintings and decorations, but I stayed there only for a short time, because I rushed to the great Russian monastery, where I decided to stay longer, and the road to get there was long.

After a three-hour walk, I arrived at the second monastery when it was already dusk. It was a small town, built on cliffs overlooking the beach, and no one was there. I walked around the buildings for a long hour and started to get worried. The darkness started to spread in the surroundings, and I was already hungry. I was at the top of the monasteries city but could not find the path that leads down. From afar, I heard a hammer pounding that would stop occasionally, and decided to follow the echo whenever it sounded. When I found a narrow path that squirted between abandoned gardens, deteriorating fences, and deserted buildings, I finally reached the source of the hammer pounding. Inside a large warehouse there were two monks fixing a huge barrel of wine. They were surprised to see a stranger walking around their monastery so late, and I was referred to their reception office. I walked up the stairs of an old building that had recently been whitewashed, and through a long, narrow corridor I reached a large hall, which other than a picture of Russian Tsar Nicholas II, had nothing in it. To the sound of my footsteps on the creaky wooden floor, a side door opened, and in front of me stood a giant monk wearing a white apron. He was in charge of kitchen and hospitality. I showed him the certificate I received in Kariai, and with a hearty smile he said he was sorry I arrived so late, but he would try to find me something to eat. A few minutes later he brought me a large serving of noodles and meat,

and a glass of wine. After I finished the meal, he showed me my small room, which was furnished with a simple iron bed, table, chair, and a candle, and on the wall was a big cross. I laid down to rest.

At midnight, I was awakened by ringing bells, which were calling for a prayer. I went down to join the monks and witnessed the holy work of people who decided to devote their entire life to prayer. There were five monks there. In a conversation I had with one of them, after the prayers, he told me regretfully, in a modicum of apology, that before the Russian Revolution, during the reign of Nicholas II, there were 3,000 monks in the monastery, but now no new monks were allowed to arrive, and there were only five left.

*

Early in the morning, before sunrise, I walked along with thousands of followers in the narrow alleyways of the temple city of Benares (Varanasi) to immerse in the holy waters of India's Ganges River. From all over India, the faithful come to Benares to pray at one of the 1,500 temples within its borders. Disfigured beggars fill in the alleys, turning to the mercy of passersby for a donation, and the sacred cows, which march peacefully, treat with patience those who happen to block their way.

When I got to the river, it was already crowded with men, women, and children, who were immersed in the water to be soothed from all their sins. Not far from where the men were doused in water, two large bonfires were burning, and near them there were bodies of those who reached the highest state of mind peace, knowing that death in Benares opens all the gates to heaven. The men, wrapped in a white shroud, and the women, in a floral shroud, waited patiently for their turn to be burned in a bonfire that would take them on a long journey all the way to immortality. And there are many who come to Benares to end their lives there and win the sanctification of the soul by having the ashes of their burned bodies scattered onto the Ganges' waters. Not everyone comes to Benares to die. Many people come there to purify themselves in a prayer at the golden temple of the God Shiva, the God of creation and destruction, or to commune with reflections in the nearby Deer Park, Sarnath, where, according to tradition, Buddha voiced his preaching to the world for the first time.

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I have a strange hobby, which leads me occasionally to visit and see places where people devote their lives to religion. For a long time, I thought

that this hobby was an escape from boredom. But when I try to observe the reasons that led me to deal with…collecting religions, I tend to believe that more than this hobby is an occupation for my spare time, it is perhaps a reflective bubble of hidden experiences during my early days, which strived to surface out and bring back the calm feel of those childhood days. Therefore, the roots of my hobby may be attributed to my early days as a child.

I spent the first years of my life in southern Russia, during the period of the revolution (1917–1923), when here and there were battles between the Red and White Armies. My father, at the time, was a discharged, wounded soldier from the Russian Army in World War I (1914–1918). During those days, when the White Army captured the city, they immediately arrested my father and subjected him to a military investigation, assuming that if he was Jewish and a war wounded soldier, he must be a communist fighting the Whites. And when the city changed hands to the Red Army, he was arrested again, being suspected that if he was Jewish, a battlefield wounded soldier, there was no doubt that he was a capitalist who fights against the revolution. I do not know how he was able to come out of it intact, after all the investigations and court martials he faced, but when the opportunity arose, he packed up his belongings in two bags and we went to Ertz (land of) Israel.

When we arrived in the country (Palestine), economic conditions there were tough. Lunch typically consisted of, in those days, a slice of bread and a tomato. A special holiday meal included fried egg with lots of onion. However, despite the economic difficulties, the family was calm and happy. Finally, we were not pushed around between Red and White, we lived in our homeland among brothers and sisters.

The first years of our lives in the homeland were full of experiences, among which the important ones took place on Saturday afternoons, when we went out and hiked fearlessly to any place our legs carried us. Our journeys never had a clear objective. We visited Arab markets, simply to talk to the merchants, or stopped by some churches to look inside at their decorations. We were running in the fields and picked up some flowers and rolled in the grass or took a brief look inside one of the mosques located on our way and watched how the people there prayed. When it was rainy, and it was not possible to hike outside, we used to gather around a small stove in the house, reclining over the kettle, which was whistling and smoking, drank tea -- a good Russian habit -- and listened to my father’s stories. And he had stories

about everything. He was telling us about his grandfather, who at the age of 10 was kidnapped and forcibly enlisted into the Russian army and had to serve there for 30 years. The reason was that those days, at the end of the 1820s, Czar Nicholai the First, the ruler of Russia, concluded that it would be a good idea for the Jews to get exposed to Russian culture. He therefore instituted a law that prohibited Jews to study Hebrew, and to assure that their Russian education would be completed, they kidnapped young Jewish boys and drafted them for a military education. They dressed them up with military uniforms trying to convince them that it would be a good idea for them to covert to the Christian religion. Among those 10-year-old boys who were kidnaped was my father's grandfather. He did not convert. When he was discharged from the military, at the age of 40, he was granted the right to settle down in one of the villages, and that is where he started to build his family. When all his children were settled down on their own, he took his belongings, including his hiking pole, and announced that he had decided to go to Jerusalem and stay there for the rest of his life. When his family tried to talk him out of it, he explained his reasoning in a simple way. He said, "When I was ten years old, I was beaten, I was tortured, I was forced to kneel many hours in front of a cross, so I would agree to convert to Christianity, and I did not cry. When I was back from the army to the town I was born in, and did not find there anyone alive, I did not cry. Now, that I am old and can allow myself to cry, I decided to cry in Jerusalem." And he left.

My father also told us that one night his mother accidentally passed by the synagogue in the city, where they lived, and found at the doorsteps a barefoot girl sitting and crying. The girl told her, with tears in her eyes, that she escaped from one of the villages in which the inhabitants attacked the Jews and killed her parents. She succeeded in escaping and walked all night barefoot to reach the big city. She did not know anyone and did not know where to go. And my grandmother, who had seven children of her own, took her home. The girl was my mother.

Most of the stories that my father told us were about old Hebrew tribes that used to travel in the desert, looking for their lost land. And about foreign Jewish tribes that built their homes in a big Russian kingdom and called themselves Cuzarim. Or about other Jewish tribes that many years ago they lost their homeland and were deported to far-away countries, and no one knows what their final destiny was.

Childhood days went by and with them my father's stories. I was more

connected to friends than to home, and between my father and me there were some disagreements about the time that a person should devote to prayers. He used to go to synagogue on Saturday mornings and insisted that I join him there. I was not always excited about the idea and tried to convince him that due to other obligations, I was not available to go. However, my convincing efforts did not always work in fulfilling my father's wish. When I was stubborn enough to explain to him that in my opinion hiking with friends was no less important than going to a synagogue, he argued against me, that man has to first give God what God deserves and go to synagogue to pray, and then, after the prayer is over, it is fine to give friends what they deserve and go hiking with them. I did not have much of a choice, and occasionally I had to go to the synagogue.

Going to synagogue did not make me a religious person in the way it is typically understood. However, during the years, without noticing it, a strange curiosity started to solidify within me to search and discover the portion that people of other nations devote to their God, compared with the portion that they leave for human beings. This curiosity probably led me to become active with my special hobby, the hobby of collecting religions. A hobby of seeking many experiences, observing people's lives, studying their cultures, looking at their praying rituals, and having conversations with their priests. At times, it also included traveling to their countries and closely observing the temples in which they prayed.

The hobby of collecting religions led me to another hobby, which in many ways has a close relationship with religion—the study of languages. That is because in many religions there is a high level of importance to the language in which the prayer is made, since it is assumed that God does not listen to prayers that are recited in a different language. Therefore, whenever I was traveling, for any reason, to any country I had never been in before, I always tried to learn before my journey the language of that country. At times it was only a shallow interest, which included learning a few sentences to help me with the contacts I was about to make with the people there. And at other times it went deeper into learning the language itself to understand its special structure, its origin, and the influence it had from other languages. During the many travels I made, I noticed an interesting phenomenon. Even if the number of words I was able to speak were very few—barely enough to conduct a simple conversation—my willingness and the effort I made to speak the country's language evoked my conversation partners a sense of a

warm feeling, which helped us get closer to each other. That is because, in general, people are proud of their language, and this pride is probably amplified whenever they encounter a stranger who comes from a faraway country and is trying to speak their language.

Chapter 2

In Africa

One day I arrived, during my roaming journeys, in one of the wonderful countries of the African continent, the Ivory Coast. This tribal-populated country, which speaks over 60 languages and worships countless deities, can serve as a good example to many other countries as to how one may live peacefully, tolerate differences of opinion, and devote all government efforts to the advancements of people regardless of their cultural and religious differences.

Ivory Coast, which lies in Western Africa, is not a big country. Its territory accounts for a total of about one percent of the African continent. It is flat and level where a few hills stand out here and there, with an extraordinary landscape and several mountains that line up along its western border. The southern part of the country is woven with lakes shrouded in mystery, and in their calm water sail small canoes made of carved tree trunks. Hidden among the trees are the fishing villages of the Ebrié tribe, who live in huts covered with palm leaves, or in houses built of branches that lean on framed posts and are plastered with clay. Further north, the land lies in the eternal shadow of forests, in which the giant trees compete with their tops for every ray of light that penetrates. In between the large trees are ivy plants that bind themselves to the nearby tree, and together with the treetops, they rise as much as possible up to the sky to absorb some rays of sunlight as well. Every available piece of forest is occupied by thousands of ferns, which are also not far behind in their contest for existence. Stubbornly, they cling to every stain of moisty ground and every tip of a nearby tree that allows them to strike a root.

In the clear areas of the forests, there are small hidden villages, whose inhabitants find their livelihoods collecting berries, which grow abundantly in their surroundings, or in processing small plots of land. The forest is generous. It is not just the fruit of the tree and the ground produce that it provides its inhabitants; it also gives them wine. Villagers tend to cut off

palm tops which have stopped yielding, and instead of the palm fruit, the crest is cut off, yielding a delicious, vibrant, white liquid that contains a small amount of alcohol. The locals call it “Bangi,” and the elders of the villages say that there is nothing better than this drink to start the morning with.

Beyond the forest area, heading north, the forests become sparser and gradually reach an open area of wide grasslands, scattered in some areas, with groves of small trees.

In all these places, wherever you may go, the residents of the villages are found to be assiduously dedicated to their fieldwork. The villages, many of which have no more than a few houses, are built according to a special tradition that has been kept for generations by the residents. Every tribe has its own special building tradition. Some build mud brick buildings in circular shapes with roofs that are covered with cone-shaped straw; while others build square-type houses, and their sloping roofs are made with layers of palm leaves. Small circular silos are often built next to the houses and raised on plastered pickets to prevent pests from penetrating. And those who grow sheep or cattle add pens to their homes, made of carefully entwined branches.

In the fields, the men are usually found working. Each man tends to his plot, handling every plant and shrub with great devotion. However, the share of women at work does not fall short of the men, either. Some women work in the field, but usually they are involved in trading or taking care of their family. Here and there women carry heavy loads of twigs on their heads for their kitchens, and others carry their wares to the market with a sleepy baby tied up to their back, swinging at the pace of the mother’s march. Near many houses there are smiling, bare-chested, women who are bearing large wooden crates filled with food tubers from which the meal is prepared for the family, and nearby children who are immersed in their games occasionally stop to wave their hands and say hello to every car passing by.

Among the many tribes living in the Ivory Coast there are those that have existed there from an early, ancient time, and others which followed and arrived there only a few hundred years ago. Before the European peoples took over the African continent and marked its maps with lines to set up boarders of the countries there, the African tribes could move and travel freely, as they pleased, undisturbed. However, since the partition to the states the tribes were not as free in their wandering. And since the boundaries of the states were determined independently of the tribes that were living there, it often created a situation where one tribe ended up living in two or even three

neighboring states. Although the countries' borderlines interfered with large movements of the tribes, they never prevented the close ties between families. There were always hidden forest paths through which the tribesmen would go to visit their families across the border.

The tribes who live in the Ivory Coast today are concentrated in somewhat clearly defined zones. The large Malinke tribe, for example, lies in the northwest part of the country, and large parts of it are in the nearby Republics of Mali and Guinea. The Baule tribe, one of whose members was serving as the president of the Republic, is located mostly in the center of the country. The Dioula tribe, which deals with small merchandise trading, is spread out across the entire country and maintains its center in the north, near the Mali Republic.

Of all the tribes in the Ivory Coast, two of them attracted my attention, whose names sounded remarkably familiar to my ears. The small tribe of Avikam, which is located by the sea in the south and is mainly occupied with fishing; and the Dan tribe, also called Yakuba, which settled around forested hills in the country's midwest and mainly engaged in agriculture. I was surprised, of course, to find African tribes so far away from Israel with names that are so similar in their sound to Hebrew, but I assumed that in a world like ours, which is full of tribes, it is inevitable that different tribes would bear the same name.

The official language of the Republic of Ivory Coast is French. This is natural and understandable, considering that the land has been subject to French rule for many years, and most of Ivory Coast's current leaders have grown up on the knees of French culture and administrative practices. However, the tribes retain their special languages and continue to speak them among themselves in their daily contacts. Although many tribesmen do not speak French, it is nevertheless a kind of unifying language, which one day may consolidate the many tribes into one nation and eliminate the differences that still separate them.

When I came to the Ivory Coast, I decided, as I commonly do, to learn one of the local languages. The selection was wide, and the choice was difficult. I was tempted, of course, to learn one of the languages that had as many speakers as possible, and after some questioning and researching it became clear to me that the language of the Dioula tribe was the most common. This tribe, which devotes itself to trading businesses, almost religiously, has managed to spread out its language to such a degree that even

in remote places there are people who speak, or understand it. The members of the Dioula tribe, who are light-ware merchants, move from village to village, buying the agricultural produce from the small farms and selling their residents garments, ornaments, perfumes, and other municipal, industrial products. Not only is the Dioula language spoken throughout the Ivory Coast, but many residents from nearby countries also understand it. And so, the decision was made, and I decided to study Dioula.

Among the hundreds of languages that are spoken across the African continent, not one has developed its own writing. When the Arabs came to Africa, they spread the Arabic writing with Islam, and some tribes have adopted this writing into their own language. At a later period, following the conquests of the Europeans, missionaries arrived in Africa, and many of them dedicated themselves to learning local languages, and wrote these languages with Latin characters. With some African languages, in-depth studies were conducted and were followed with written textbooks in English and French. However, for some reason, no one has bothered to write and distribute a textbook for the Dioula language, and all my attempts to obtain such a book came to a dead end.

After all my efforts to get a Dioula textbook did not bear fruit, I turned, as a last resort, to my driver and requested him to try and look for such a book for me. Much to my surprise he brought me a book the next day and said that I could learn Dioula from it. Although it was not a textbook, something could be learned from it with some effort. Half of the book was written in French, and the other half was its translation to Dioula. In the process of trying to solve these crossword puzzles, by comparing similar sentences in both languages, a few words were deciphered. A not-so-effective method of learning a new and completely unknown language, but in the absence of a better solution, I dedicated my available evenings to an attempted decoding of the big crossword puzzle.

After some efforts, which lasted nearly a month, I was somehow able to interpret the meaning of a few words. And I must admit that this amusement would sometimes bring me to despair, because many of the words consist of only one syllable, but each has many meanings. The sentence, “a ko ko a ba tara ko ka ko ko,” for example, which simply and innocently means “he said that his mother went to the river to wash the back,” has a different meaning for each one of the five “ko’s.” It was therefore exceedingly difficult, at first, to understand if the river said anything to the back, or if mom went to the

river on his back. But slowly I managed to acquire a small vocabulary for myself and wrote it meticulously in my notebook.

It is easy to imagine how great my surprise was, and a disappointment as well, when after a long study I happened to accidentally peek into the inside of the cover where I found out from the tiny letters written there, that all the time, while I thought that I was studying Dioula, I lived in an error because in fact I was learning the Bambara language. I was a little angry at myself for not checking and examining all the cover sides before I started studying. But I accepted it, because I learned that the Dioula and Bambara languages belong to the same family, and their similarities are so great that those who understand Bambara will not find it difficult to understand Dioula either. Furthermore, I even had a reason to rejoice in making the mistake, because textbooks for the Bambara language could be obtained more easily. However, since I did not have any other textbook that was more suited for my purpose, I continued my study assiduously using the crossword method.

Chapter 3

The Africans

The African continent is divided into several clear geographical and climatic regions; their differences are mainly in the amount of precipitation. In the north, there is the largest desert in the world, the Sahara Desert, which occupies about one-third of the entire continent. It is an arid, sparsely populated area, with almost no rain. It has large areas of migratory sands that grow nothing and cannot sustain any settlement. In other areas, the vegetation is very meager, consisting mainly of various weeds that pop up after rain, surface at random, continue to grow if the soil is moist, and a short time later dry out. In oasis places, which are built around springs or wells, and in the mountainous areas of the Sahara that receive a larger amount of rain, there are settlements that are mainly occupied with cultivation of palm trees.

South of the Sahara Desert, there are large plains of grassy land that stretch down to the tropical zone. These plains receive more precipitation, and their vegetation mainly consists of tall weeds and sometimes individual trees. The plains also are not densely populated, but shepherd tribes tend to roam with their herds, setting up their encampments near the few water sources that exist there. Central Africa receives a great deal of precipitation, and therefore has large areas of virgin forests and many river sources. Beyond the virgin forests, in the southwest, another large desert stretches out, the Kalahari Desert, which is bordering in the east by plains with sparsely growing shrubs and trees.

From the lakes in Central Africa flow the rivers that create the White Nile, and in the mountains of Ethiopia the Blue Nile begins its flow. These two rivers connect near Khartoum, Sudan, forming the great Nile River, which flows north into the Mediterranean Sea. The Fouta Djallon Mountains, in West Africa, have the sources of the Niger River and the Senegal River, which continue their flow to the Atlantic Ocean. The Congo River, which begins its flow from the Great Lakes of Central Africa and receives many

tributaries along its way, also flows into the Atlantic Ocean.

In every region of Africa, especially along the rivers, near lakes, or near their springs, tribes existed for thousands of years and adapted their way of life to the environment in which they lived in. The entangled forests and wide deserts were obstacles that slowed down migration, effectively preventing connections between the tribes that lived there and the world beyond their limits. Groups of families or small tribes could live for many years within their isolated community and cultivate their culture, language, and customs without any outside influence. They supported themselves from what nature gave them and evolved in accordance with the special conditions of the area in which they lived. Each area left its own special marks on the way of life and on the development of tribes that were living there. Nutritionally, the tribes had to make a living from the flora and fauna in their surroundings. In the deserts, where vegetation is meager and climatic conditions do not allow working in agriculture, the residents found their food in hunting: everything that was moving was edible. Grasshoppers, beetles, lizards, ants, and mice were regular food, and as luck would have it, if a deer or a wild goat was hunted, it was a good enough reason to make a feast. In the grass plains, the tribes mainly dealt with livestock and cattle, and in places where rainfall was sufficient, they also grew grain. The shepherds would migrate with their herds from one place to another, replacing their area of residence according to the seasons and pastures. The grain growers, on the other hand, were more connected to the land that they cultivated, and therefore established in that area permanent settlements that gradually evolved into villages. Those villages were built near crossroads of shepherd migration routes, and in later years became small cities, expanded into commercial centers for exchange of goods. In the forests, the residents dealt mainly with picking up fruits and edible tubers and diversified their food with hunting meat or edible plants that they grew in cleared forest plots.

The life of every tribe, including every detail in it, was influenced by the conditions that nature forced upon them. It developed into a living phenomenon with social experiences that evolved from a common destiny. The hunters in the desert plains lived in small groups of several families, because the small amount of water sources and limited sources of food in the desert did not allow for large tribes to exist. They did not have tribal leaders they must obey, and the preservation of social order rested in the public hands, who according to their social tradition and customs, managed to

maintain the tribe's integrity. The unique battle of existence of desert hunters resulted in a condition in which most of tribesmen spent their time alone or within the limits of their small family. In open spaces the hunters went hunting in small units, because in large groups they might scare away the animals. When they prepared to capture termites—which are a highly desirable food—they did it using some family support. Termites, whose way of life is somewhat like bees, build their nests in tall dirt slugs. During the migration season, when a new termite queen goes out with her companions to build herself a new nest, the hunters' family gather around the nest and collect the termites for themselves in large quantities. Similarly, the search for honey from wild bees—which is also a highly sought-after dish—is also done in small groups, or within the family. In this case, however, there is an interesting collaboration with a small bird, which also enjoys honey. Since the bird cannot penetrate the beehive, it is circling over the heads of the honey seekers, guiding them to the hive. After the hunters have taken their share, they leave some for the bird, as a reward for its help.

The living conditions in forests forced their inhabitants to collaborate, which was necessary for existence. While in the desert a hunter goes out hunting on his own, in the forest he must do so in a group. One group of hunters is ambushing at one side, often assisted with nets or a cloaked dugout, while on the opposite side, the other group emerges from its hiding place and chases the animals away towards the ambush by making loud noise. The hunted animal becomes the property of the entire group of hunters, and clear rules are established for the distribution of the quantity and quality of the meat among the participants. To prevent deprivation in the distribution of the spoils there must be someone with high authority to decide in the event of disagreements. This role requires a tribal chief, who holds the power that relates to all social life and customs.

Cooperation between forest residents is not limited to hunting alone. Deforestation of forest plots for agricultural cultivation also requires a joint, collaborative effort of many people and requires a social discipline that is guided by the tribal chief. The chief determines the places that may be cleared, and he is also the one who decides on the way in which the land will be distributed among the tribe's families.

Despite the differences in lifestyle and customs of the tribes that live in different African regions, there are several common factors that influence the African's way of thinking. And these are not much different from factors that

influenced tribal development on other continents. Phenomena of social life and observations of nature that cannot be explained have always been a mystery that has led people to search deeply into their thoughts. The miraculous events of childbirth, inevitable death, a sudden flood, or the usual phenomenon of day-and-night changes, were always mysteries that never ceased to preoccupy human thought. Although people knew that they were helpless in changing the regular order of these phenomena, they felt in their senses that there cannot be an action without a reason. And if there is a reason, they must look for it in a force that causes it. The force must be within their nearby residential area, and therefore they should try to understand the good or bad activities that the force creates as it pleases and causes these mysterious phenomena that effect their lives.

And if in addition to the life phenomena and the cyclical nature there are extraordinary events that are added—such as lightning, which sets trees on fire; epidemics that cause many casualties; or several consecutive years of drought—it is likely that the mysterious forces that cause these disasters are angry at the people who suffer from them, and the only way to remove their anger is to turn to them and try to appease them. To find proper ways to please the mysterious force the Africans always searched for nearby objects within their sight that may hide the forces when they plot an evil. Such forces were related to objects that appeared to them as stronger and greater than they were; it could have been a big tree which can withstand a severe storm, or a small venomous snake with the power to kill. To those objects, or animals, that appeared to the Africans as mysterious forces that may be good or bad, they attributed human traits as seen in people who have great power. Therefore, in their attempts to appease the hidden forces, they took the same measures they would take in dealing with people who are stronger than them. People upon whom they depend and who may harm them if they are not pleased. They therefore tried to speak to the hearts of these forces—tried to explain, apologize, promise, and bring them offerings.

The belief that gifted objects or animals have mysterious forces that control the life of their habitat motivated Africans to hold rituals and prayers for many objects. When for some reason it is decided to cut down a tree, the Africans treat it with great respect. They kindly explain to it that they have no evil intentions and ask for its forgiveness for having to cut it down. And when they go hunting and manage to harm the hunted animal, they stand in a circle around the carcass, apologize for the killing and ask for forgiveness for

having to capture it.

Despite the attitude of respect and the awe that Africans bestow to high forces, they do not always treat them politely. They generally believe that between gods and people there should be a fair relationship. If it sometimes seems that a god or a spirit does not carry on their duty well, they are not prevented from coming back to them with claims, or even threats. And if the prayer for a successful hunt brings up nothing, and the hunters return from the hunt empty handed and disappointed, they face the tree or the stone to which they presented an offering before the hunt and slam them roughly like this: “We prayed to you and asked you nicely to help us, and you ignored us. We have no use from you. You should pay attention to these things and next time try to do your duty better, otherwise we will have to look for someone else, who we can trust.”

The failure of an action, or the cause of a natural disaster, is not always attributed to god’s or a spirit’s negligence. Often there is an attempt to blame it on people’s behavior. The suspected cause maybe that the people did not provide their god the desired offering, or that someone sinned in mystery and for that reason god did not fulfill its duties as expected.

In the narrowest and simplest realm of their life, the tribal people encounter embarrassing social phenomena that evoke new doubts every day. From their own experience they know that what happens inside them can easily be hidden from all the gods around them, and they do not always have to tell them honestly all their thoughts. It is also clear to them that others are also capable of keeping their thoughts hidden, and they can never be assured of the pure intentions of those around them. These mental wanderings and thoughts are further entangled by social phenomena that exist in any group of people living together. Jealousy of someone’s success, a whisper of a curse, theft of foodstuffs or ornaments, or suspicion that someone had secretly violated the tribal law, prompted the Africans to look for effective ways to convince those around them of their honest intentions, and try to find ways to be convinced in the honest intentions of others towards them. This was the beginning of the belief in the abstract power of thought, as a powerful factor in the Africans’ community life. A force that cannot be seen or understood by its nature but may be used to make evil or do good.

Believing in the power of thought to cause harm has spawned the belief that there is an abstract counterforce, which may act against it and magically undo any evil intent. This power is built into magic words, which are spoken

loudly or whispered silently, and can, according to African belief, not only undo malicious thoughts but can also expose those who committed an offense in secret. Many African tribes who believe in the power of witchcraft, where certain words include it in their meaning, have created rituals which are based on a fixed order in taking an oath or imposing an oath on others. These rituals impose fear on Africans, and under their influence they usually confess in doing something evil or in having intent to do one. However, the African society, with all its belief in the power of words to influence the behavior of an individual, did not ignore the possibility that people would prefer to risk receiving punishment from gods because of a perjury, as long as they can avoid harsher punishment that society may impose on them. To avoid an escape from punishment, oath ceremonies are sometimes accompanied by a special secret potion, for which only the priest knows the ingredients. The job of the potion is to determine whether the one who drinks it is telling the truth or lying, whether he is a sinner or innocent. The discovery is safe and sometimes immediate. If the potion drinker dies after drinking it, it is clear to everyone that he was a criminal or a sinner; and if he stays alive, he is innocent. And the fear of drinking the potion is so great that many of the peasants prefer punishment just to avoid drinking the potion.

Areas or objects whose unique character relates to a mystery often become holy places, and special laws are applied to them with special restrictions. A high mountain covered with clouds on its summit may store hidden forces; a forest that hatches strange sounds at night without understanding the reason for them; or a large river that flows with great power and its waters whispers secrets—all of these generate respect that is followed by a prayer with reconciliation rituals. The head of the tribe, who is crucial for the decision-making process in daily life, including all the social problems in the tribe, becomes as result of his public duties the representative of the tribe towards the gods and the spirits, as well as the messenger of gods to the tribe. This status gives the tribal chief the exclusive right to address the gods, and he gradually becomes a high priest, and in many cases a saint. The phenomenon of a clan-chief-holy-priest is common among African tribes and is followed by mysterious rituals that only the tribe's chief can conduct. He determines the required behavior, which is often related to the tribe's customs, and imposes duties that constitute a religious and social constitution that bind all the tribe members together.

Most African tribes maintain a close tie with the head of the family, and

while he is alive, all his descendants are obedient to his discipline. This relationship does not cease to exist even after the head of the family dies. Since he was able to do anything in the past, his descendants assume that even after his death, his soul can actively interfere with family life and influence whatever is happening there. When the head of the family was alive, his sons and relatives knew that if they did not annoy their father or grandfather, the life in the house was good and quiet. And whenever he became angry, there were difficulties for all his family members, and it was necessary to appease him to restore peace and calm back to their normal conditions. The same process continues after the head of the family dies. The family continues to share the events in their lives with his soul, telling him about plans and consulting with him in case difficulties arise. Offerings are brought to the grave, and the visitor does not forget to share with the soul of the dead the stories of all their joys. When the head of a family is revealed in someone's dream, they try to explain this phenomenon as a displeasure of the dead about the behavior of the family towards his memorial or his soul. And since the African is always full of suspicions about his surroundings, he always tries to look for ways to convince those around him of his sincere intents, and he does the same thing in relation to the spirit of the dead. He goes to the grave to have a real friendly conversation with the dead and may say to him something like this: "Here, we brought you the offering, and don't be mad at us. You have given us enough trouble when you were alive, and you do not have to keep adding trouble to it right now. You yourself see that we have not forgotten you and we have brought you a gift so that you will be pleased where you are." At the end of the friendly talk, which is not always so short, the offering is placed down, and the converser walks away.

To ensure that the connection between the deceased and the family is properly maintained, it does not end by going to the burial place. A human figure made of wood or stone is created, and this figure represents and symbolizes the spirit of the dead. It is placed at home, so that the spirit may constantly see everything that is going on in the family and be convinced that its memory is not forgotten or harmed. The same figure, to which the family attributes great importance, is inherited, and over time it becomes a saint. Future generations embrace it for what it is, and regardless of the person it once represented it becomes sort of a family god, or idol, whose role is to protect the family's happiness. Idols that symbolize the spirits of the dead, and protected the family and brought it luck, were accepted as family gods.

They were developed in many tribes, and were also accepted by the ancient Hebrews, as evidenced in the Bible in the story of Jacob and Laban relations:

"And Laban went to shear his flock and Rachel stole the idols of her father." (Genesis 31:19)

When a tribe or a family move to a new place, they also take with them the idols that have become an integral part of the family life.

Many places in Africa attach great importance to the idols of the region in which they live. If a tribe finds that its living conditions in a new settlement are better than in their previous place, they naturally tend to credit the local idols, who benefit their residents. There is nothing wrong with replacing their idols with the idols of the new place, and many African tribes must have exchanged many idols during their wanderings from one place to another. However, if the tribe lives in a permanent place, and it is cut off from the influence of other tribes, or if it maintains a strong sense of nationalism that prevents foreign influences from penetrating into the tribe's realm of customs and life, they usually keep their idol, observe the tribe's traditions, and continue to maintain it for many years. The only changes that may apply to customs and traditions of such a tribe stem mainly from natural developments as results of changes in living conditions.

Believing in mysterious hidden forces within different sources has inevitably resulted in disciplinary methods that bonded all tribesmen, forcing a behavior upon them that was based on traditional rules. The responsibilities, duties, and prohibitions were many. Some things you cannot see; others you cannot touch. Some words should not be said, and others should not be heard. The observance of religious discipline was strict and the penalties for offenses were sometimes severe. This approach stemmed from a belief that the responsibility for maintaining customs, as imposed by tradition, must be shared by the entire tribe, and from the belief that a violation made by one tribe member may bring disaster on the entire tribe. The observance of tribal customs and rituals is usually monitored by priests or elders, who are only allowed to address problems related to religion. Besides these priests, sometimes there are also secret religious societies organized within the tribe or the village, and whose membership is conditional upon fulfilling certain requirements. These societies are usually acting as a social club for adults, but sometimes they also deal with religious coercion or punishing of the sinners. The actions of the concealed societies are mainly done at night, and are accompanied by ritual dancing, tapping on drums, and covering faces

with masks. Other associations—very few of them—are nothing but gangs of bandits who, under cover of religion, demand donations and taxes and punish those who refuse to pay them. All these associations usually maintain confidentiality, and it is forbidden for other people who are not members of the association to see them in their actions or know who their members are.

The development of social and religious life in African tribes was undoubtedly influenced by inter-tribal contacts that existed in early periods. The degree of impact of one tribe on another suggests the frequency and duration of these inter- tribal contacts, as well as a possible route of their wandering. And just as the tribe's special life conditions would have affected the development of their religion, they must have also influenced the development of their language. Each tribe developed for itself a special vocabulary that suited its conditions and reflected its way of life. A vocabulary of a tribe that lives on banks of a river, or along a seashore, was different from the vocabulary of a tribe that was living in the desert. The inter-tribal contacts, which were a result of neighborly relations, migrations, or wars, usually enriched the vocabulary of the tribes that came into contact and introduced new concepts in their language and speech that were adopted from the tribe with which they came into contact.

Many tribes in Africa have lived for many years in near isolation, and in a long disconnect that isolated them from foreign influences. Such tribes continued to uphold their special traditions, speaking their own languages, which have little influence from other languages. The Bambara tribe was probably one of those tribes.

Chapter 4

The Bambara Language

The Bambara tribe of nearly 1.5 million people lives today in the Republic of Mali, which is north of the Ivory Coast. No one knows for sure from where and when the tribe reached its present location, and it is not clearly known where its former location was. It is generally believed that before the tribe settled in the Odienné region of the Ivory Coast, the tribe emigrated from its permanent residence at an uncertain time, a few hundred years ago, and settled down in an area that is now called the Republic of Mali.

We first hear about the existence of the Bambara tribe in the 16th century, when it fought with the Peulh tribes against an Arab army from Morocco that invaded the area of the Niger River. After this war, the Bambara tribes disappeared from the African political arena, and for a long time no one heard anything about them. In the 18th century, they emerged again from hiding as a strong and well-organized military force. They fought against Arab and Muslim tribes, which were based in central Mali, and were engaged in slave trading.

When I started to learn the Bambara language, I was interested in their religious customs as well. To my great surprise, I discovered that although some members of the Bambara tribe took upon themselves the religion of Islam, the vast majority continued to maintain and practice its traditional customs, and these customs have a remarkable resemblance to some of the traditional Jewish customs. A newborn boy receives his name on the eighth day of his birth, and if he is the first-born, his father must redeem him from the chief of the tribe by making a small donation of 100 coconuts. And it fits perfectly to the writing in the book of *(Numbers 18: 16):*

"And their redemption price (at a month old you shall redeem them) you shall fix at five shekels in silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, which is twenty gerahs."

That is, the son must be redeemed with 100 gerahs, and the Bambaras redeem him with 100 coconuts; “coconut” is called “guru” in their language.

One of the most popular types of sacrifice made in the Bambara tribe is conducted by raising a rooster over the head of the person for whom the sacrifice is held. Just as many Jews practice an atonement on the eve of Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement). Another Bambara holidays is called “Kuta,” where they tend to be tortured by self-spanking. And that is again reminiscent of a Jewish custom that was common in some diaspora communities, according to which they used to beat themselves on Yom Kippur to observe the writing in the book of *(Leviticus 23:28): “and you shall afflict yourselves.”*

The surprising similarity between some Bambara’s customs and Jewish customs invigorated my curiosity about their language, and for a long time I continued to study it using the crossword method. A few months later, I managed to accumulate a small vocabulary and I could put together a few simple sentences. And the bigger the number of words I learned, the easier it was for me to understand what I was reading. Slowly, and to my great excitement, I began to discover a remarkably interesting fact. If at first, I thought I was studying a Dioula, and later I thought that the same language was Bambara, it became clear to me by then, to my great astonishment, that what I learned was … the ancient Hebrew language. It is not like the Hebrew language that we speak today, but it retains a sizeable vocabulary that left no room for any doubts in my mind.

Before we move on to check out some tangible examples, which will prove the connection between the ancient Hebrew language (Bambara) and the modern Hebrew language, it is perhaps advisable to say a few words about the development of languages in general. In this brief introduction we will not penetrate deeper into complicated linguistic analyses, and we will not deal with scientific definitions related to the structure of languages. Instead, we will only mention those factors that have influenced all languages in the past and still affect their continuous changes today.

The vocal cords, tongue, lips, and the structure of the teeth have enabled man to express many syllables since the dawn of his existence. With these syllables and with his developed sense of memory, he began the process of cooperation between himself and those around him. Because only an organized cooperation, based on many actions that are stored in memory, can drive a person to create fixed vocal signs to express repetitive actions.

Man began speaking many tens of thousands years ago, and the language he used consisted of many words of one syllable, in which—with the assistance of hand and body movements—he tried to express his desires and experiences and talk to his colleagues. The first syllables that were used as meaningful words must have been coincidental and were used mainly within the family. One syllable could have had many meanings, and therefore highlighting the differences between them may have required changing the sound of the syllable or extending or shortening its pronunciation.

The development of life and the rallying of people into groups and tribes forced the person to increase his vocabulary and attach syllables to words to enable a more accurate description of desires, intentions, or instructions that he wanted to express. Increasing the vocabulary was also done by mimicking sounds that are heard in nature and providing those sounds with permanent pronunciations and turning them into words of the spoken language. Gradually, the differences between verbs and nouns were introduced, and the expressions of time were created: present, past, and future. Every group of people who live together created for themselves the necessary vocabulary and the special speaking style, which enabled them to collaborate in their social framework.

The vocabulary and the special speaking style of each group of people underwent a natural development process that was a result of social, economic, or religious needs. In addition to the natural development that occurred within groups of people living together, many languages underwent a developmental process that resulted from links among speakers of different languages. The extent to which speakers of one language influenced the development of another language depended on the development level of the languages' speakers and on the nature of the contact between them. If the contact stemmed from free will and a good neighborly relationship, the language would enrich in idioms and terms related to the friendly contact the speakers had with each other. New tools, ornaments, perfumes and spices, new metals and their processing form, religious rituals, and law practices, have all enriched the language of the receiving tribe, by adopting them from the giving tribe.

When the contact between the speakers of two tongues was formed because of hostile relations, there would also be mutual influences between the speakers of the two languages, but the language of the conquered people would undergo much deeper changes than the language of the occupying

people. These changes depended on the length of the occupation period and the form of the new governing rules. If the goals were only to collect tax and the conquered people could continue to live their ordinary lives and engage as before in the business of commerce and crafts, and continue to observe their religious rituals, the influence of the occupying language would have been small. However, if the occupation was accompanied by military control for an extended period, and the land run by representatives and officials of the foreign people, the changes in the language of the conquered people would occur more quickly and more prominently. Because in that case, the new government needed officials, translators, and tax collectors, and would strive to hire those who were educated and could quickly learn their language. The Capital city would gradually become a cultural and political center of the occupier, and those who aspired to integrate into the new cultural life, and to gain higher social status, had to do so by learning the new language. Those who were close to the government, out of the conquered people, were at a higher social class, absorbing the new culture and spreading it among their people in their daily contacts with them.

In areas far from the political center, the penetration process of the new language was slower, and the national language continued to be spoken without accepting the influence of the foreign language. If the occupation lasted many years, distancing partitions would gradually fall, and the language of the occupying people would penetrate even the most isolated places, becoming, over the years, the new national language of the conquered people.

If the conquered people had a culture that was ingrained by a tradition of many years, it was harder for them to instill foreign influences and push their national language out of their people's consciousness. In such cases, a merger between the two languages might have created a new language, which differs from the two original languages in structure, pronunciation, and the way of speaking. A good example of such a development can be seen in the modern Persian language. When the Arabs occupied Persia, they instilled in it, along with the Islamic religion, the Arabic language, a language of the Quran, and the Arabic writing that was considered holy. However, the Persian culture was built on an exceedingly long tradition and therefore could not be completely dissolved by the Arab culture. As a result, a new language was created, composed of half Persian words and half Arabic words. This new language, which is written in an Arabic script to which the Persians added

four letters to represent consonants that did not exist in the Arabic language, became the modern Persian language.

Besides influences resulting from direct contact between speakers of two languages, there are many other factors that influence language development and changes. One of the factors is related to a natural tendency to shorten, or rush, speech because of impatience, or simply to save effort. As a result, syllables are swallowed, or pronunciations are changed, with an exchange of letters creating new words that can barely be identified as their original source words. Among the most common changes in pronunciation of words there are the replacement of consonants M – N; Z – S – TS – SH; R – L; and B – P. Another factor in affecting the pronunciation of words stems from special pronunciation habits of speakers of one language, who adopt in their language words from other languages. In Japanese, for example, which is built on permanent syllables where the letter "L" does not exist, the word "Israel" will be expressed as "Yisirai."

Words also tend to change their semantic meanings due to changes in social life, which may yield different meanings to the same concept in different geographical areas. The word "baron," for example, today means a noble title, but in the past it meant a person with power, and probably originated from the Hebrew word "bar-on", meaning "possessing-power." This title was gradually assigned to property owners who, because of their wealth, gained power; or because of the power that they had, they accumulated property. In a later period, when estate owners became a respected status in society, the title of baron was inherited as a peerage, without having any connection with power or estates. A similar concept indicating a link between power and property is also found in the Russian language. "kulak" in Russian means "fist," which symbolizes power; and it is also used as an expression of a "landlord." Before the revolution, the nickname "kulak" was a respectable nickname, but later it became a derogatory nickname for people who use their employees to become rich.

The use of the same term in different geographical areas may be interpreted differently in each region. If we invite a Frenchman to a snail dinner, the invitation may be welcomed as a true friendship—since, in France, snails are considered a delicious dish. However, if we invite an Israeli to a similar meal, we may get caught up in unpleasantness, where the invitee may look at us as savages, and may even sever his ties with us, because in Israel snails are considered a nauseating creature forbidden from being eaten.

There are many languages that were spoken in the far past and disappeared without any trace of them left. Others were disrupted with so many changes in structure and shape, that it is difficult to identify their original language. Most of the languages whose speaking people existed as national organizations, evolved and expanded by adopting terms and concepts from other languages, which enriched the expression possibilities. The Hebrew language has undergone a similar developmental process and changes, and the language that is spoken today is not completely like the Hebrew language spoken in ancient days. The pronunciation differences between the letters Tet–Tav, Alef – Ayin, and Qof – Kaf, which were once accepted, have been distorted and do not continue to be observed today. These, however, are not the only changes that have occurred over the years in the pronunciation forms of the Hebrew language. Once I had an opportunity to listen to a reading of some verses from the Torah (Jewish Bible), which were articulated in Samaritan pronunciation, and although the reading language was in Hebrew and I knew the verses very well, I could but barely discern and understand what was said. This was because the Samaritans probably retain one of their ancient forms of the Hebrew language, and this form is completely different from the way it is customarily spoken today. The sentence *"Take a census of all the congregation of the people of Israel, by clans, by fathers' houses…" (Numbers 1: 2),* which sounds in Hebrew like "Seu et Rosh Kol Adat Benei Israel LemishpeHotam Leveit Avotam...," would sound with a Samaritan pronunciation as follows: "Sao It Raush Idat Banei Israael Elmishpotema Albeit Avoteima…" And for the word "God," which is often pronounced in Hebrew as "Hashem," the Samaritans pronounce it as "Sheima."

Despite the many changes in the Hebrew language, its foundations have managed to maintain its shape and uniqueness for thousands of years. And unlike many other languages of ancient peoples, which were forgotten after their countries were conquered, or when their inhabitants were exiled, the Hebrew language maintained its character and dialect throughout a long diaspora of exile. This extraordinary phenomenon can be credited to the national-religious unification of the Hebrews throughout their exiles, and to the Jewish zealots, who maintained the Judaism spirit and its tradition throughout the years of exile. For a long time the Hebrew language was a heritage of only a few—those who devoted their lives to holy studies—and embedded within the exiled national mind, that together with their return to

their homeland, the Hebrew language would return to be spoken by all.

In-depth study of languages and their mutual influences on each other began about 200 years ago, when a British official in India, Sir William Jones, learned an ancient Indian language, Sanskrit. To his surprise, he discovered that it had a great resemblance to the Latin and Greek languages. Studies that compared Sanskrit to other languages gave birth to the assumption that such similarities could not be coincidental, and that most European languages, including the Germanic languages, probably evolved from another forgotten, ancient language, which was common to all the other languages that were similar to each other. These assumptions gave birth to additional ideas regarding the history and development of languages, which resulted in opinions that link certain forms of speech to the traits of a race. These opinions led to strange ideas regarding the superiority of one race over another. There were even language scholars who specialized in marriage problems, stating that a crime is committed when a person speaking a Fusional language marries a woman speaking an Agglutinative language (see definitions below). These ideas were based on the inability of people from one nation to pronounce words as people from another nation do. However, this inability, as a simple observation proves, is not inherent to race. It is related to the environment in which the baby grows up and learns naturally how to speak his language. A Swedish baby who grows up in China speaks articulate Chinese, and a Japanese baby who grows up in Russia will learn to naturally pronounce the two types of "L," the soft and hard, as the Russians usually express, even though the Japanese usually have difficulty expressing it. The pronunciations habits, which we adopt in our childhood, build their roots so deeply in us that at an older age we cannot possibly become free of them. And a Russian, or a German, who learns to speak a foreign language at an old age, will always have in their speech the sounds and pronunciations of their native language.

Languages are usually categorized by structure and divided into families and groups according to their similarities. Linguists do not always agree on the classification or division into families of languages. But in general, languages can be divided into three types: Isolating languages, Aggregate languages (Agglutinative), and Fusional languages. While this classification is somewhat outdated and may not accurately reflect all the differences in language structures, it does give a general picture of the major differences.

The Isolating languages, the most prominent example of which is the

Chinese language, as well as many African languages, are mostly noticeable by the large number of single-syllable words, which do not change to express different relations, times, nouns, or verbs. To differentiate between one-syllable words that have the same pronunciation but different meanings, it is common to raise or lower the pronunciation pitch or simply change its tone. The languages are called Isolating because the sentences are composed of individual words whose relationship is determined by the order in which the words appear in the sentence and the use of additional supporting words. For example, if we would like to express in an Isolating language a sentence such as "I will go to your home," we would have to say it roughly like this: "I go you home," plus a reference word to mark the future.

Unlike isolating languages, which maintain a constant form of separate words, the Agglutinative languages—the most prominent example of which is the Turkish language—tend to attach a few words, and parts of words, combined with different suffix forms, to create a single word that sometimes expresses an entire sentence. For example, the word CALISMA means "work"; MI indicates "negative"; YAN is an extension to mark an action that is in progress; LAR is an extension to mark "many"; and DAN means "from" or "out of." Therefore, by combining these words together with their extensions, a single word can be built: CALISMIYANLARDAN, which means "from those who do not work."

In Fusional languages, such as Latin and Hebrew, the prefix and the suffix are used primarily to change the shape of the word to distinguish differences in time, relation, or gender. And so, when we say YIKHTEVU ("they will write") in Hebrew, it is immediately clear to us that the act of writing will be done in the future, it will be done by more than one person, and we will not be among the writers. Or in other words, a future tense, third person, plural which is derived from the verb "KATAV" ("write").

The sorting of languages into families and groups is done by comparing words that are similar in pronunciation and meaning. When many similar words are found in two languages, it leads to the conclusion that both have evolved from a third language, which in the distant historical past was shared by both. Based on such similarities, it was determined that most European languages evolved from a Sanskrit-related proto-language and that they belong to the family of the Indo-European languages, the main sub-branches of which are Romance, Slavic, and Germanic languages. Based on a similar comparison, the Hebrew language is associated with the family of Semitic

languages; while the Japanese language—for which until now no resemblance has been found between it and any another language—is regarded as being a family on its own.

There are about 1,000 languages spoken in Africa today, some of which clearly show the influence of other languages. Scholars who have studied African languages handle them the same way as studying other languages, sorting them into groups and families according to the similarity that exists in the language structure, pronunciation, and the meaning of words. The Bambara language is classified by some as a Niger-Senegalese language, which along with Dioula, Malinke, and several other similar languages, belongs to a group of Manding languages. This group—in which the similarities between the languages are quite easy to identify—is spoken in wide areas of West Africa, especially the Ivory Coast, the Republic of Mali, and Guinea. With today's tendency in several African countries to replace the official European languages with African languages, efforts have been made for several years to make Bambara the official language of the Republic of Mali.

The study of languages and their influence on the way of thought began in very ancient times. Ancient Greek philosophers who were interested in linguistics spent many hours arguing and analyzing theories, trying to understand whether a name given to an object was given to it by chance, or did it stem from the special attributes of the object. In Hebrew, perhaps more than any other language, linguistics is being learnt from an early age and the Bible helps in doing it. We learn from the Bible that the name of ADAM was given to him because God created him from ADAMA, which means "earth" in Hebrew. And YA-AKOV (Jacob) was so named because he was born while "following" (LA-AKOV in Hebrew) his brother Esau. The name MANN ("manna") that the Hebrews ate on their way out of Egypt was given because the Hebrews "*did not know what (MANN) it is*"; and MANN is the early form of the question word MA, which means "what" today in Hebrew. The Babylonian name was called BAVEL, because God was angry at the Babylonians, and BALEL, meaning "confuse" in Hebrew, was the way God punished them by confusing their language so that they would not understand each other. These simple, logical explanations created a habit of searching every idiom for the reasons of its existence and resulted a natural curiosity to research every word for its components and try to understand its meaning from the ground up. Every word in every language has its own unique

history, and those who practice etymology try to trace its roots. However, after thousands of years in which the word has been in use, it is exceedingly difficult and sometimes impossible to determine the origin or foundations of its components.

A similar phenomenon also exists in Hebrew. Although it managed to maintain its current structure for many years, there are many words in Hebrew whose meaning we know, and we use them in expressing the idiom they need to express, but we do not know if the word was borrowed from another language or whether its components have been lost in the forgetful nature of history. On the other hand, there are many other words that we do not use today because we do not know their meaning.

A special testimony on the existence of an earlier ancient Hebrew language that was different from the Hebrew language that was used 2,000 years ago is brought to us with some clues from the ancient Hebrew historian Yosef Ben Matityahu, known as Josephus Flavius (37–100 CE). In his writings, when he was arguing with one of his opponents to prove that the existence of the Hebrew people is very ancient, he brought in a testimony of the Greek philosopher Socrates (470 – 399 BCE), who said that he met a wise Jew and that Jew told him that he was a "Kallan." Yosef Ben Matityahu explains that "Kallan" means "smart" in our language. This word is not known in the modern Hebrew language, but in the Bambara language "Kallan" means "to learn" and "to teach," and it is therefore possible that at the time when Yosef Ben Matityahu lived, this word was used to designate a "wise man," one who teaches children. Elsewhere, when an ancient historian talks about the history of the Hebrew people, he tells us that there was a prophet named Devorah, and he explains that "Devorah" means asking God for mercy. Today we do not know of such an interpretation of the word "Devorah." But in the language of the Bambara it can be interpreted as a "mouth of force" (DA-BA-RA).

We cannot know today when and how long the Jewish people used the ancient Hebrew language. However, the fact that Yosef Ben Matityahu, who belonged to a family of priests, knew ancient words from it, suggests that about 2,000 years ago there were others who knew it, too. It is possible, then, that at that time the ancient Hebrew language was a holy language, that only priests or Levites used it for their prayer rituals, and very few understood it. Just as today, very few people understand the Aramaic language, even though it is accepted as a prayer language in synagogues.

As we mentioned before, many Hebrew words that appear in the Bible, and in the other ancient sources of the Hebrew language, do not unveil to us their meaning, while other words that are currently being used cannot be identified by their source. However, the Bambara tribe, which was long detached from any foreign influence, persistently maintained the ancient Hebrew language, continues to speak it to this day, and uses the same Hebrew words whose meaning or source are not known to us. We will try to test a few words to see that.

We begin with an interesting Hebrew word that has always been a source of pride to Jewish people, which for thousands of years the Jewish people held on to, and thanks to its existence they returned to their homeland after 2,000 years of exile: "Zionists." In Ancient Hebrew (Bambara) this word consists of two words and an auxiliary syllable. SI, which means "tribe" or "people," and NIN, which means "these." Therefore, SI-O-NIN means "these tribes" or "this people." At various times in Jewish history there was a supreme institution that was discussing, interpreting, and instructing people of the Hebrew religion laws, and set in accordance with these interpretations the laws of conduct of individuals and the public. The name of the institution was SANHEDRIN. We do not know the origin of the name, and there are those who believe it was borrowed from the Greek language. However, in ancient Hebrew (Bambara), the name SANHEDRIN has a noticeably clear interpretation. SAN means "high," and DYIRA means to "direct" and "guide." The SAN-DYIRA became SANHEDRIN, which was therefore an institution that gives instructions from high up, or as we would call such an institution today, "the Supreme Council."

In the book of *(Judges 13: 5)*, it is told about a God's Angel, who informs Manoah's wife that she is about to give birth to Samson, a priest of God, and tells her the following: "*For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor* (MORA) *shall come upon his head.*" Today we do not use MORA because we are not sure of its meaning. From the story we hypothesize that it could mean "razor," and some believe it to be an "ointment." However, in the language of Bambara, MURU to this day simply means "knife."

To finish this chapter with another example, which seems to be interesting, indicating that at the time of writing the Bible there were no longer many who mastered the ancient Hebrew language, we will use the story from the book of Daniel, which describes a glamorous party thrown by Belshazzar, in which he used the sacred tools he robbed from the Temple.

When the party reached its climax, a mysterious hand appeared on the wall and wrote the following sentence, MENE TEQEL-U FARSIN. The hand wrote it in the ancient Hebrew language (Bambara), and no wonder that only Daniel could explain its interpretation. However, the author who wrote the book of Daniel, and relied in his writing on traditional stories, was no longer well versed with the ancient Hebrew language, and translated the meaning of the words in a somewhat distorted way. Because in ancient Hebrew (Bambara) MENEMENE means "glamour," TIKE means "break" or "cut," LA is an extension syllable to indicate an "action" in progress; O means "your," FARA means "killing," and SIN means "arrived." The original sentence was MENE-MENE-TIKE-LA-O-PARA-SIN, which went wrong to become MENE-MENE-TEQEL-U-FARSIN, and its original and accurate interpretation will therefore be, "The glow is in the process of breaking and your death has arrived." And indeed, the beginning of Chapter 5 of Daniel, which describes the glamor of Belshazzar's debauchery party, as well as at the end of the chapter, where it says that Belshazzar was murdered that night, fits the interpretation of the words that appeared on the wall.

The few examples presented above prove that the connection that existed between the ancient Hebrew language and the language that is called today Bambara cannot be coincidental. It had to be formed as a result of the close contact between the people who spoke it. Today's differences between the Bambara language and modern Hebrew point to the wonderful process of the development of the Hebrew language from an Isolating language, at its outset, based on many single-syllable words; a natural transition to an Agglutinative language by attaching one-syllable words to multi-syllable words; and a final development into a Fusional language, which changes the meaning of the word by attaching a prefix or suffix. We will explain it with one simple example.

O means in Bambara "he," "she," "him," "her," "his," and "the."

NA means "come," "bringing," "reaching," "causing," "walking," and a reference for marking a future.

KA is a relationship word to note "belonging," "act," or "direction," an emphasis word to note an act which was done in the past, and a way to use it as "to."

SA means "death," "dying," "ending," "finishing," and "ending."

The combination of the three words SA-KA-NA will indicate from right to left "Came to kill," and from left to the right "Death comes." From these

two forms, two Hebrew words were created that are being used to this day. NAKASH became “snake biting”—which means “comes to kill,”

and SAKANA retained its meaning of “danger,” an event that may cause death.

Adding the pronoun word O to the end of the word NAKASA creates NAKASA-O, “his snake,” which is a simple way to create a possessive pronoun.

After establishing the similarities between so many words in the Bambara and Hebrew languages, and after Joseph Ben Matityahu tells us that “Kallan” in Hebrew means “wise,” the next question to be asked is when did the Bambara language became the Hebrew language. The existence of this period at one time could not be in doubt, because out of the many surviving words in the Bible, which are meaningless to us today, the Bambaras continue to use them in their everyday life. However, when we try to trace to see how and when the Bambara tribe was cut off from the ancient Hebrews, we encounter a mystery. Because apart from the story that Moses married a black woman, there is no place in the Bible—not in traditional Jewish stories or in the history of the Hebrew people—in which the name of the Bambara tribe is mentioned. Although there is a clear Hebrew influence in many areas in Africa, there is no explanation for that. The only possibility that comes to mind is that this tribe was lost while the Hebrews were leaving Egypt; and for some unclear reason, after it was cut off from the main body of the Hebrew tribes, it disappeared for 3,000 years. Not only did it maintain the ancient Hebrew language throughout this long period, but it also maintains some of the Hebrew customs up to this day.

Chapter 5

The African History

In trying to understand and find out the connection that existed between the Tribes of the Hebrews and the Bambara tribes, we will briefly review the history of Africans, and mainly concentrate on the area where the Bambara tribes live today in the large open spaces of Mali.

Although for many years the African continent was considered an uncharted mystery land, inhibited with human-eating savage tribes that lived where the Republic of Mali is located today, there were important political events that occurred there many years ago, and cultures that evolved, whose influence reached far beyond the African continent.

The land of Mali, which until its independence was known as French Sudan, is largely a desert country, covering an area of one-million and two-hundred square kilometers, and making up about four percent of the African continent. In the north, Mali is a continuation of the Sahara Desert. Towards the south, the amount of vegetation increases, and the area gradually becomes a grassy meadow suitable for raising sheep and cattle. Near its southern border, in Guinea's Fula Jalon Mountains, there are some rivers that flow through Mali and are used for field irrigation and sailing. The large Niger River flows from south to northeast, and near the city of Timbuktu it makes a large turn and continues its flow to the southeast, gushing into the Atlantic Ocean in the southern part of Nigeria. Two smaller rivers, the Bafing and Bakoy, flow from south to northwest, becoming the tributaries of the Senegal River, which flows in the northern part of Senegal near its border with Mauritania.

The first great kingdom that Arab historians can tell us about is the ancient Kingdom of Ghana. It stretched from the Niger and Senegal rivers, in the south, up to the Sahara Desert in the north. It is thought that the Kingdom of Ghana was founded in the 3rd century by the Soninke tribes, which were descendants of Hebrew tribes. In the early 4th century, the Berber tribes of

North Africa invaded Ghana and ruled it until the 8th century. They ruled it until a Soninke revolt succeeded in taking power out of their hands and replaced it with a monarchy that was ruled by one of the Soninke people.

The Kingdom of Ghana evolved to become rich, thanks to the trade in gold and salt. Although these two products were sourced from outside Ghana, trading was done within its borders, and the taxes collected from this trade made the Kingdom of Ghana a very wealthy country. The sources of the salt were in the village of Terhazza in the Sahara Desert, and the gold sources were found at a mysterious site called Wangara, which is probably south of the Senegal River, but to this day no one knows its exact location.

The reason for the mystery that surrounds Wangara is related to the special trading system that the Wangaras took to replace their abundant gold with salt, which was needed for their food. Salt, which was mined in Terhazza, was loaded on convoys, crossed the Kingdom of Ghana, and arrived near the Senegal River. By using drum taps, the Wangara residents, who were hidden across the river, were informed that the convoys were ready to begin negotiating for the conversion of salt into gold. Each trader would place his salt in a separate pile along the river, and the entire convoy would then get away from it for about ten kilometers. When the convoy was out of sight, the residents of Wangara emerged from their hideout across the river, moved to the other river side, placed next to each pile of salt the amount of gold they were willing to pay for it, and immediately went back across the river. A day later, the salt merchants returned to their piles and checked the amount of gold that was offered for their goods. If the offer seemed good enough to them, they would leave the salt, take the gold, and leave. If the amount of gold that was left next to the salt piles seemed too small, the merchants would leave without taking the gold, hoping the Wangaras would add to the price. This is how peaceful negotiations took place for many years when no one could see the Wangara people, and they themselves were keeping it fanatically secret so that no one would find out where the mines were. And indeed, no one knows it to this day.

The Kingdom of Ghana, which was under the rule of the Soninke tribes, was not Muslim, but many of the Muslims who settled there enjoyed the hospitality and trade activities that the Ghanaian authorities allowed them to get involved with. Muslims had long cast their eyes on Ghana’s wealth and even tried to conquer Ghana several times, but Ghana’s powerful army thwarted these attempts and defeated the Muslim armies. However, in the

mid-11th century, a fanatical Muslim preacher named ibn Yasin founded the Almoravid movement, which, among other actions, attacked Ghana, capturing and destroying its cities and inhabitants.

While Ghana's destiny was doomed by the Almoravids, the Kingdom of Manding tribes began to organize in the southern Mali. These black tribes that converted to Islam, and belonged to a group of Manding speakers, began to spread by conquering several small rival kingdoms, and gradually established one of the largest kingdoms in Western Africa, the Kingdom of Mali.

King Sundiata, who is known as the founder of the Manding Kingdom, expanded the kingdom's borders. At the end of his life, the kingdom encircled territories that lie today in the states of Mali, Guinea, Senegal, and Mauritania. The kings who followed Sundiata, especially King Mansa Musa, established the country on Islamic foundations. In Timbuktu, whose wealth and glory were known all over the world, they established a college of Islamic studies and encouraged science studies. They also built large mosques, which were important centers for spreading Islam in Africa.

The country's revenues were based primarily on taxes from trade, and Mali's wealth was legendary. When King Mansa Musa left the country to make a pilgrimage to Mecca, he was accompanied by a convoy of 100 camels loaded with gold, and thousands of officials and servants. After Mansa Musa's death, the Kingdom of Mali, which existed for some 250 years, began to decline.

In the mid-15th century, the Songhai tribes began entering the political arena of Western Africa. King Sonni Ali Ber, who founded the kingdom, was a Muslim who did not observe religious practices, and hated foreigners even if they were Muslims. One of his first actions was to take the city of Timbuktu from the Manding, rob their treasures, and massacre its inhabitants without sparing the city's educated Muslims. After the conquest of Timbuktu, Sonni Ali Ber turned to conquer the city of Djenne, which lies about 250 kilometers to the south of Timbuktu. Surrounded by rivers and well-fortified, the city survived a siege that lasted several years, but eventually it also surrendered.

Sonni Ali Ber, a talented military man, terrorized many tribes that feared for their fate and migrated south to the forest areas. Among these tribes were the Akan tribes, which included a large group of Baule speakers in the Ivory Coast and Ashanti speakers in Ghana.

The Songhai King excelled not only as a military man but also as a talented organizer with vision and initiatives. As part of his military organization, he established a large war fleet that consisted of several hundred boats that secured the cruise routes along the Niger River. The fleet's success was so great that Ali Ber decided to dig a canal from the lake, which is located west of Timbuktu, to the city of Oualata, which is about 300 kilometers from the lake. This immense engineering operation was not completed although about 15 kilometers of the canal route were excavated.

The Songhai Kingdom was the last of the great kingdoms in West Africa. It existed, as such, until 1591 when a Moroccan army, armed with 1,000 strong guns, destroyed a large Songhai army, which was armed with lances and swords. After this defeat, there was complete disintegration of the kingdom, and many Songhai tribes decided to become independent by fighting each other to gain as much as possible from the defeat of their great kingdom.

While the Songhai Kingdom was crumbling, the Kingdom of Bornu began to rise to prominence in the southeastern part of Lake Chad. The beginnings of this kingdom remain vague, and what is known is based more on opinions than on facts. It is thought that the ancient settlers of the areas, which are called Kanem and Bornu, and located in the northeast and southwest of Lake Chad, were tribes called Susu. Between the 7th and 9th century CE, white ethnic tribes, which apparently were fleeing from Yemen or Ethiopia, merged with the Susu tribes that sat in Kanem, and established the Kingdom of Kanem. This kingdom had a long list of kings, who in the 11th century took on the Islam religion, and in the 13th century tried to impose it on Bornu. After long battles with the Susu that lasted, on and off, for some 100 years, the Kanem armies managed to conquer Bornu and the kingdom became known for a long time as Kanem-Bornu.

In 1570, King Idris the Third came to power in Bornu, dedicating most of his efforts to strengthen the Islam governing of the country. He built many mosques, stabilized power, expanded the country's borders, and based the lives of residents on the Quran law. The country existed until the end of the 18th century when Muslim Peul tribes conquered it.

The Arab conquests in Africa began in the mid-7th century with the occupation of Egypt and gradually spread west along the entire settled coastline of North Africa. The purpose of the Arab occupations and their

spread was to distribute and impose the religion of Islam on the conquered peoples. After years of wars, several principalities and small kingdoms were founded in Northern Africa. They took over the convoy routes of the Sahara Desert and were fighting among themselves over influence zones.

From time-to-time new religious groups were founded in these kingdoms, which were fanatic about Islam, and Jihad wars were declared to impose their faith on those who had not yet adopted it. When Jihad fighters occupied a settlement, its inhabitants would be obliged to accept the Islam religion, or else they would be executed. There were also cases where Muslim religious leaders did not give the occupiers the choice to convert to Islam and in their fanaticism they destroyed settlements in order to eradicate all non-believers. Consequently, it happened that one of the most important innovators of the Islam religion in Africa, Mohamed Abd el-Krim, known as al-Maghili, occupied in the 15th century a Jewish settlement in Tuat, which is located in the Sahara Desert, and ordered that all of its inhabitants be slaughtered without sparing children, women, and old people. According to Arab historians, it is also known that in the Gundam region near Timbuktu, there was a large Jewish settlement in the 14th century, apparently destroyed, and its fate is unknown.

Some of the Arab kingdoms that were established in North Africa accumulated wealth and power and started spreading towards the south. In part, their motivation for expansion was the spread of Islam, but mostly it was aimed at generating higher profits from trading slaves, gold, and coconuts—three commodities that were in great demand and brought big profits to their traders. The trade in slaves was cruel and merciless. Salaried army delegations would raid serene African villages at dawn and capture their inhabitants to be sold as slaves. Anyone who tried to escape, or resisted, was murdered; and the captured were tied to long wooden posts, leading them to the slave-trading centers. Many did not last the walking effort and died of suffering, beatings, or starvation. Throughout the journey, the convoy would stop for the night, and the slaves would remain bound, groaning from the pains of the journey and mourning the family members who died along the way. They could only sit down to receive their meal, which consisted of millet seeds soaked in water.

Many of the wars to capture slaves were carried out under the guise of Jihad, which is a holy war for spreading Islam. The declaration of Jihad War would have given a kind of religious legal validity to capturing slaves and

attracted many volunteers who wished to collect spoils of war. After the discovery of the American continent, and the great demand for a cheap labor force that followed, the trade in slaves reached such a high level that many of the African tribes, who lived peacefully in their territories, and knew what was expected to happen to them from the Jihad wars, organized into combat units to protect their lives. In the early 18th century, several Bambara tribes, led by a king named Coulibaly, organized a strong army and began to practice active defense with an objective to protect their lives and property.

The history of King Coulibaly is shrouded in mystery. It is thought that he was one of the highest-ranking members of the Bambara tribes, and when he saw that their lives were in danger, he decided to solidify their power and attack the Muslims in their own bases. He succeeded in repelling the Muslims and founded the Kingdom of Segu on the Niger. After his death, King Ngolo, who was a capable military man, came to power and extended the borders of his kingdom up to Timbuktu. Ngolo was king for 40 years and he was killed in one of his wars. The Kingdom of Bambara existed until the early 19th century, when it was conquered by Muslim armies.

In large areas of the African continent there are customs and legendary tales that provide grounds to the assumption that many tribes in the past have been subject to Hebrew influence. Moreover, sometimes it is even thought that some of these tribes belonged to the Hebrew people, and at some unknown time in the past they were cut off from them but continued to evolve in accordance with the conditions of their surroundings. Under Arab pressure, there were many who accepted the religion of Islam, and some must have assimilated into other tribes and lost all contact with their people of origin. The Peulh tribes, for example, fought with might against the Arab armies, but eventually they were defeated and had to accept the religion of Islam. However, despite of their being Muslims today, including all that it entails, they know how to tell the stories that they are the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and that many years ago some tribes walked towards the sunrise, while they walked towards the sunset. Today they maintain a strange tradition of redemption of the son, in commemoration of the original custom that was probably forgotten. Since in accordance with Hebrew tradition, the eldest does not belong to his parents until he is redeemed from the priest, today mothers in the Peulh tend to ignore it and give the son to the care of their family members.

The Tuareg tribes that are also Muslim waged severe wars against the

Arabs for a prolonged period, but eventually they were forced to adopt Islam. However, some of their customs are incompatible with the religion of Islam, particularly women's freedom and rights, which are opposed to restrictions, reservations, and inferior status imposed on other Muslim women. A Tuareg woman does not have to cover her face, and she can be among men. She is entitled to demand a divorce from her husband and plays an important role in the life of Tuareg society. Moreover, it is the girls who learn to read and write the special writing of the Tuaregs, and the boys are mainly taught the art of war. In places where the Tuaregs were not banned from celebrating their special Spring Holiday, they often eat a special legume, probably in memory of the Hebrew prohibition on eating Chametz (wheat food) and sacrifice a ram with a special ritual that only the elders are permitted to set. And it is probably related to the commemoration of the Passover sacrifice.

In the 10th century CE, a mysterious Jewish queen named Judith appeared on the scene of political events in East Africa. She conquered the Christian Kingdom of Axum in Ethiopia and controlled the country for 40 years. We do not know any details of her origin, and it is not known which tribe she belonged to. And just as she appeared in mystery, so she disappeared, and we do not know what her fate was and the fate of the tribe to which she belonged. It is possible that the Falasha tribes, who are dark-skinned Jews, now living in Ethiopia, are remnants of the same mysterious tribe that at one time ruled Ethiopia.

During an unknown period, the Whydah tribes in southeast Dahomey established the Kingdom of Savi, building their capital, Ouidah, near a large lake. Portuguese, Dutch, French, and English slave traders built commercial centers within the Kingdom of Savi, from which they worked to gather and ship slaves to the Americas. The residents of Savi are known to have been Jewish. Their capital they called Yudah (an ancient Jewish tribe), a name that was disrupted and became Ouidah. The city, which is in Dahomey, exists to this day. In the north of Cameroon lives another African tribe that traditionally preserves the Ten Commandments, and excluding minor style changes they are completely the same as the Ten Commandments of the Hebrews.

Another tribe that resides in Tanganyika, now part of Tanzania, maintains an interesting tradition related to Adam and Eve. In the area where the tribe lives there is a tree whose fruit they call "Hava." When a woman is married, she wears the fruit "Hava," which symbolizes her marriage, on her neck, and

she is called a “Hava Woman”. And it is a reminiscent of the story of Eve, who was eating an apple in the Garden of Eden, resulting in the “marriage” of Adam and Eve.

From all the above, it is clear that Africa had a strong Hebrew influence, yet it is impossible to know for sure when it occurred. And for all that is known up until now, it is also difficult to find a connection between the ancient Hebrew language and the Bambara language. And since a close relationship between the Bambara and Hebrew seems to be highly likely, it probably occurred at a very ancient period, and we will have to turn to the Bible to try to solve this mystery.

Chapter 6

The Bible as a History

There is no doubt that the book of the Bible, besides being a book of religious value, is an important historical document that faithfully describes events in the life of the Hebrew people. Some of the biblical descriptions were probably written by eyewitnesses, and some are based on stories from the people's genealogy, as preserved by many years of tradition. It is difficult for us to know today when the Bible books were first written, what language they were written in, and what their original form was. However, one thing of which there is no doubt is that the Bible in its present form is based on other lost books, and sometimes it is based on shortened versions of the original written descriptions. An evidence of this is provided to us by the Bible itself. In the book of Joshua 10, verse 13, it says:

"And the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, until the nation took vengeance on their enemies which is written in the Yashar Book…."

In the same Chapter, verses 22-23 say:

"Then Joshua said, "Open the mouth of the cave and bring those five kings out to me from the cave." And they did so, and brought those five kings out to him from the cave, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon."

From these verses we learn two interesting things about the way a biblical story was written. First, the author tells us that the story is based on the "Yashar [honest] Book," which is ancient and that at the time of writing it may have still been present. Second, and this we learn indirectly, is that the story was written at least 200 years after it occurred, because the name "Jerusalem" was given by David to a city that was called "Yebousi" some 200 years after Bnei Yisrael ("sons of Israel" - the Israelites) conquered the country.

In the book of Numbers, Chapter 11, verse 11, it was written:

"Therefore it is said in the Book of Wars of the LORD, Waheb in Suphah, and the valleys of the Arnon."

Which means, that there was another book, called the "Book of Wars of the LORD", which was lost with probably many more accurate details that described the Israelites' journeys through the desert, and the wars that they waged along the way.

Book I Kings 11, mentions two other important books, which had detailed historical descriptions of the Hebrew genealogy, and which indicates that the Bible books in their current format constitute only a summary of the original books:

"Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred and how he reigned, behold, they are written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel." (verse 19)

When we read the Chumash (Pentateuch—the first five books of the Hebrew Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy), we may tend to believe that at least some of the events described there are written according to memory. This is probably because the ancient books in which the Israelites used to write their history were no longer found at the time of their writing. It is easily seen from the inconsistences and errors that are being discovered. For example, Chapter 33 of the book of Numbers talks about the Israelites *"And they set out from Moseroth and camped at Bene-jaakan" (verse 31) and that "Aaron the priest went up Mount Hor at the command of the LORD and died there" (verse 38).* However, the book of Deuteronomy says exactly the opposite *"The people of Israel journeyed from Beeroth Bene-jaakan to Moserah. There Aaron died, and there he was buried." (Chapter 10: verse 6).*

Such inconsistencies are natural phenomena, if we recall that years passed from the time the events occurred until they were written down in a book, and therefore the obscured sense of time and space caused inaccuracies. Another factor in inconsistencies and mistakes were dozens or hundreds of scribes who spent many generations copying the books by hand. In the copying process, the mistakes multiply because the book from which they copied was faded or unclear. Therefore, the writer who copied the book completed the missing, or unclear, words in the way that seemed most proper to him. That is in line with a simple human trait, in which the process of copying may swap lines, a word may become awry, or a spelling mistake occurs. An interesting example of such disruption we find in Chapter 33 of the book of Numbers, verse 30. The entire verse "*And the Canaanite, the king of Arad...*" does not belong to this Chapter, nor to the place, and it was probably inserted there

mistakenly by one of the copying authors.

Again, when we read in the Bible the history of the Hebrew people, from the time they were a few shepherd tribes, in Egypt, until they established their kingdoms, and if we try, according to these descriptions, to trace the important stage that begins with their Exodus journey from Egypt and ends with their settlement in the land of Canaan, we encounter some mysteries that are difficult to explain. First, we know that no one has a habit of freeing slaves of his own good will. How did it happen, nevertheless, that the Hebrew tribes managed to organize themselves and set free from their enslavement in Egypt? From where did they depart to freedom? In which direction did they go? In which deserts did they wander 40 years? From what did they make a living throughout their wanderings? And what was the mysterious Manna that they ate on the way? These, of course, are not the only historical mysteries of the time, but it may be said that these mysteries are the most noticeable ones and present a puzzle right up to the present day.

When delving into reading Chapter 33 in the book of Numbers, which describes in detail the way that the Israelites took from Egypt to Canaan, it turns out that of nearly 50 mentioned places, we can only safely identify one site, Jericho, and perhaps two or three other general names such as Jordan and Moab. It is particularly surprising, since at the time of their settlement in Eretz ("country") of Israel, the Hebrews should have had almost free access to most of the places that are mentioned in the book. It is also interesting to note that for many of the names mentioned, we do not know whether they denote a city, river, desert, or mountain. And here is where an interesting question arises: Did those who wrote the five Pentateuch books, many years after the events occurred, know themselves where were the locations of all the places mentioned in the book? If we are assisted by the writing in the book of Deuteronomy, Chapter 34, we will conclude that because of the lapse in time between writing about the events and their actual time of occurrence, there were places mentioned in the Bible that were unknown to the Hebrews who had been residing in the homeland for many years.

"So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD, and he buried him in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor; but no one knows the place of his burial to this day." (verses 5-6)

And this fact of *"but no one knows the place of his burial to this day"* is undoubtedly surprising. Because the Israelites were the only peoples, out of

all nations, who incredibly collected their roots in books since early ancient times. The books did not only include historical facts, but also described historical analyses, written with a great talent, including background explanations to events that were even related to the characteristics of the people involved. How is it, nevertheless, that we could not identify the sites that the Israelites passed through on their Exodus rout from Egypt.

Our inability to answer this question could be a result of several factors. First, the place that we call today by the name of the Sinai Desert was probably not inhabited at a time when the Hebrews passed through it, and it had no cities or villages like those that were located at other places in Canaan; and in the absence of permanent settlements, it is impossible to maintain names of places. The second factor lies in the fact that some of the names that were mentioned during the journey were symbolic names, which are not understood by us today, that the Israelites gave to various sites to commemorate special events or unusual experiences. For example, the name "Punan" was given perhaps to a place in the desert in memory of a "Pinui" (meaning "evacuation" in Hebrew) or separation that occurred in that place, and there is nothing special about this desert place that can help us locate it. (In ancient Hebrew, "Poni" means to "migrate" or "disconnect.") A third factor—and it is a frequent factor in recording historical events related to the names of places—is the distortion of place names by both an historian, who records the events, and by the elders who provide the information for the records. And the last factor, which may sound a little strange, considering an accepted tradition of thousands of years, is that perhaps Mount Sinai and Mount Hor are not two different names for the same site, but rather the names of two different mountains. And it is possible that the main journey of the Israelites on their way to Canaan took place through a location that is completely different from where we think they passed through today.

If we continue to carefully follow the descriptions of the Israelites' journey, on their way from Egypt to Canaan, we will reach some conclusions that may later help us to solve the mystery. We know that the walking distance from the Sinai Desert to the Land of Canaan cannot exceed one month, even if the hiking rate is extremely slow. And if we remember that tribes on migration disperse over great distances, and we accept the explanation that the Israelites wandered 40 years between Sinai and Canaan, we will have to conclude that during all that period they must have been walking around in a great, endless, circle and in fact they were staying in one

place. This does not make sense, because on their exit from Sinai they had a clear and defined goal of reaching Canaan. Another conclusion, which cannot be in doubt, is that at the time when Benei Israel ("Children of Israel") stayed in the Sinai Desert, the desert was an arid region, lacking vegetation and water, and unfit for a permanent settlement. Because if it was not so, the Israelites might have been settlers there, too.

If, after coming to these conclusions, we would still like to try to uncover the mystery, we will be forced to use an indirect method and check the causative conditions that may give us more solid clues. We will try to turn to another source that may contribute to solving the riddle—the history of the Land of Egypt.

Chapter 7

Departure of the Hebrews from Egypt

When we explore the history of Egypt to trace the events associated with the exit of the Hebrews, we discover to our surprise that although the kings of Egypt used to carefully record and describe at length all the events that took place during their reign, we find nothing that may give us a clue. In all the excavations that were carried out in Egypt, and in all the writings that were found, there is not a single document discovered that could testify, or mention, what is described in the Bible about the Exodus. The reason for this, of course, lies in the fact that the Egyptians did not attach any importance to the Exodus, and that for them the event was so insignificant, that they did not consider it fitting for any commemoration in any of their writings. However, there is also a possibility that the success of the release of the Hebrews from enslavement in Egypt was a national failure for them, and they usually did not commemorate failures. Whether it is, one way or another, it does not help us solve the mystery. The last thing we may do is to try to track the evolution of ancient Egypt and get assisted by some known political and geographic events of which we do have more established information, and which may help us shed some light on the riddle.

We have no authoritative knowledge of the date when the Israelites left Egypt, because as mentioned above, the Egyptians did not write about it and the Bible gives us only clues. It is believed by most historians that the Exodus occurred at the time of King Ramses II about 1250 years BCE. This is supported by the writing in the book of I Kings, Chapter 6, which describes the completion of the construction of the Temple:

"In the four hundred and eightieth year after the people of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the house of

the LORD." (verse 1)

Presumably, the practice of counting the years from the day the Israelites left Egypt was acceptable to the ancient Hebrews and was reasonably accurate. However, in the absence of any other proofs, we may accept Ramses II's reign as a period when the Hebrew slaves rebelled against the Egyptian monarchy and freed themselves from their enslavement.

When Ramses II was crowned, Egypt was a great kingdom, rich in culture with a political tradition of nearly 2,000 years. Its political, cultural, and economic development began in a very ancient period, mainly due to the special geographical conditions that made the Nile Valley the richest agricultural area between the Atlantic Ocean and the Red Sea. For many years, this agricultural center attracted herding tribes from the land of Canaan and the Sahara Desert. In drought years, many herd tribes that resided in Canaan saw the Nile Valley as the only place they could migrate in search of grazing land for their flocks. In the Sahara Desert, which was in a drying process, the shepherd tribes remained without water sources and pastureland, and therefore they migrated to the Nile Valley seeking new settlement places. All the tribes that reached the fertile valley were settled down along the river, placing their hopes in the faithful Nile and wishing that it would provide them good livelihood for many years to come. But also, the Nile—which floods Egypt in regular seasons of the year and provides irrigation water, rich in fertilizers, to the grain fields—was also occasionally disappointing. There were years in which the Nile was not overflowing enough for irrigation, and then there was famine in the land. While in other years its floods were breaking out with tremendous power, sweeping away everything standing in their way and wreaking disaster over the land. There was a time in the early settlers' lives along the banks of the Nile when they decided to unite, organize, and try to join forces to harness the Nile for the benefit of all. That desire required a large workforce with a central organization that would employ this power in accordance with fixed and well-designed plans. This was probably the primary motivation for the tribes along the banks of the Nile to get organized, which was followed by the foundation of the great Egyptian Kingdom.

The process of organizing the Kingdom of Egypt must have gone on for many years, and not all the tribes that lived along the banks of the Nile joined the organization by their own good will. There must have been a time when one of the largest tribes in the region decided to devote itself to performing

works related to the Nile's disaster and later forced their will on other tribes.

Egypt's first royal dynasty rose to power about 3,200 years BCE. The development of the kingdom was like in many other kingdoms. The king was considered a divine embodiment with unlimited rights, authorized to conduct his rule the way he liked. He sets up his own palaces, the temples in which he worships, and the palaces where he dies. At the same time, the first attempts are made at the state level to curb the flow of the Nile.

Egypt had enjoyed a long period of peace and quiet national life that had not been disturbed by external factors. The special geographic conditions, that surrounded the land of Egypt with deserts, or with kingdoms that were too weak to attack, allowed it to cultivate its special culture and to commit itself to developing an economy that was based primarily on the Nile. Harnessing the Nile to regulate Egypt's economy required many large-scale engineering operations. In many places the banks of the Nile had to be elevated to prevent floods. Elsewhere, irrigation canals had to be dug to direct the overflowed water into areas of cultivated fields, or to build dams to control the water flow and store it with an intention of using it during dry seasons. All this work led to a multi-faceted development in all areas of life. Engineering workers developed methods of measuring land areas, and advanced methods of building dams and canals. Improvements were made to irrigation methods that resulted in increased crops. The people were satiated, rich, and calm, and could tirelessly devote themselves to cultivating art and social life. With the high standard of living of the ancient Egyptians, a set of laws was formed based on fair and legal proceedings. Land distribution methods and taxation methods were established, which allowed the rulers to amass many means for building temples and cultivating religious rituals and allowed the people to live a good life.

In addition, an artwork industry was developed for creating ornaments and decoration materials, and the interest in imported ornamental products had increased. It is no wonder, therefore, that the land of prosperity served as a constant attraction for many of the shepherd tribes that looked for a peaceful way of life and happiness in the Nile Valley. Egypt was a progressive and generous kingdom and did not interfere with those seeking to come within its border. It allowed the shepherd tribes to come with their flocks and return to their place of origin whenever they wished. This generosity was also enjoyed by the tribes of the Hebrews who came there from the land of Canaan.

As with any developmental process that lasted for many years, Egypt also

knew periods of economic and social prosperity as well as periods of slump and suffering. During one of these depressions, which resulted from the weakening of the central government due to internal conflicts, Egypt was invaded by the Hyksos tribes, who controlled it for about 150 years, particularly in the Delta region. It is thought that during that time the large core of the Hebrew tribes came to Egypt, and later became the tribes known of as the Israelites.

At the beginning of the 16th century BCE, embittered by the national insult of the foreign Hyksos controlling them, the Egyptians managed to mobilize a large military force and expel the foreign rulers from their country. For several decades, the kings were mostly devoted to Egypt's internal consolidation. Kings descended and kings rose, and the Kingdom of Egypt continued to evolve. The levels of employment were increasing, the state was consolidating, and the borders were safe. The Nile was almost fully controlled, and the kings found more time to glorify their names. Interest was generated in distant lands, and Egypt embarked on their conquests. Towards the end of the 16th century BCE, King Thutmose III was strongly motivated to conquer new lands. He took over the entire coastal strip from Egypt to Syria, reaching in his conquests as far as the Euphrates River.

Egypt has undergone several more internal crises stemming from differences in religious opinions. Some small kingdoms in Asia seized the opportunity and rebelled. The country was struggling but managed to hold on and to rebuild itself into a great kingdom, and in 1,300 BCE Ramesses II came to power.

Ramesses II, known as Ramesses the Great, inherited a large and stable kingdom that stretched from the land of Kush, up at the Nile, to the Land of the Hittites in Syria. After a brief period of solidifying his power, Ramesses decided to emulate former Egyptian kings, who expanded Egypt's borders, and he became involved in a war adventure with the Hittites in Syria. He was miraculously saved in this war, which ended indecisively. And as it sometimes happens, following an indecisive war, Ramesses II and the King of the Hittites made a peace treaty with a friendship alliance, and the Egyptian king returned to his country.

Apparently, disappointed by his war failure, and having great vigor, Ramesses II decided to compete with his predecessors in a very original way. He began to devote himself to construction work on such a scale that no previous Egyptian king ever did before. He built palaces and temples all over

Egypt, and his main activity was concentrated in the great bend of the Nile, which stretches between the Aswan Dam and the Third Cataract. All of Ramesses' buildings excelled with great magnificence and glory because he spared no means and workforce. Many temples were carved into a rock with giant Ramesses statues that decorated their entrances. Famous among these temples are the great temples in Aber Simbel. The entrance to the great temple of Aber Simbel is decorated with four huge statues, each reaching 20 meters high. Beyond the sculptures carved into the rock there are large temple rooms, all decorated with reliefs and paintings that portray with great artwork events from Egyptian life.

For the massive construction projects that stretched over large distances, along the banks of the Nile, hundreds of thousands of slaves were needed, and massive organization of supplying construction materials and food for the workers took place. It is reasonable to assume that at that time most of the slaves in Egypt, among them the Hebrew slaves, were concentrated in this construction area and were employed in all types of work related to the construction of the temples. The working conditions of the slaves were exceedingly difficult, and in addition to the hot climate that prevailed in the area, there were probably also disruptions in the supply of food, which created bitterness among the slaves and caused unrest. This unrest, which bordered on an uprising, resulted in a brutal approach by the Egyptian foremen, causing an accumulation of rage and despair. And this despair created one of the greatest slave rescuers who rose in mankind in all generations, the great leader Moses.

Moses was a quiet, innocent man who herded sheep of his father-in-law Jethro. Gifted with a sense of human justice, he painfully saw the prolonged suffering to which his brothers were subjected and decided to try to free them from their suffering. With his great decency, he believed that if he would go to the Egyptian authorities and politely explain to them that it was improper to employ people in hard work without providing them with their food, the authorities would understand and immediately release his people. He consulted with his brother Aaron, and together they decided that it was advisable to share the plan with the elders as well:

"Then Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the people of Israel. Aaron spoke all the words that the LORD had spoken to Moses and did the signs in the sight of the people. And the people believed; and when they heard that the LORD had visited the people of Israel and that

he had seen their affliction, they bowed their heads and worshiped." (Exodus 4: 29-31)

After Moses received the consent of the elders to his plan, he was accepted for an interview with Pharaoh and asked him to "*Let my People Go.*" But here he was in for a disappointment because the King of Egypt not only refused to release the slaves, but he also criticized Moses and Aaron for interfering with their work.

"The same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their foremen, You shall no longer give the people straw to make bricks, as in the past; let them go and gather straw for themselves. But the number of bricks that they made in the past you shall impose on them, you shall by no means reduce it, for they are idle. Therefore they cry, 'Let us go and offer sacrifice to our God.'" (Exodus 5: 6-8)

This deterioration in the working conditions of the Hebrews, in addition to preventing them from praying to their God and following their tradition, caused great disappointment and deep despair to an extent that some of the enslaved Israelites began to object to Moses' attempts to free them. And Moses came to realize, the hard way, that his concepts of justice differ from the concepts of justice of the enslavers, who believed that because of their power they were entitled to treat slaves as they pleased. However, despite his failure to negotiate with Pharaoh, Moses did not despair, and stubbornly continued to turn to the Egyptian authorities and continued to request that his brothers be released. After all his diplomatic appeals had failed, Moses decided to use force and openly rebel.

The rebellion mission was difficult and complicated. The people had to be organized, and those who opposed needed to be persuaded, since that was the only way that might result in their release from enslavement. Slaves of other origins needed to join the rebellion planning as well, while strictly maintaining confidentiality of all preparations. Weapons had to be collected, food had to be stocked for a long journey, the course of departure had to be prepared, as well as the details for the entire "Miracle" system. And all of this under enslaved conditions, while the Egyptian guards were continually walking among the slaves and keeping a tight watch on them. And here is where we get to the most complicated part of the rebellion: planning.

The ambition of Moses and those who decided to join him was to return the Tribes of the Israelites to their homeland - Canaan. For the first intermediate destination, that should be a place of organization in preparation

for the return to the homeland, Moshe decided on the "Mountain of the Rising Sun," which is the Sinai Desert. (In the Bambara language, SINAI has two meanings: "Sunrise" and "Tomorrow," and both probably symbolize the bright future that was awaiting the nation in Canaan.) But since he and the slaves who were with him were most likely centered at the largest working area at the time, the Abu Simbel Temples, he needed to carefully choose the withdrawal options after the rebellion. And if we look at the withdrawal options that he had we will come to the conclusion that he had only one choice. He could not turn North, towards the land of Canaan, since he would fall there straight into the jaws of the Egyptian army, which was centered in the Delta region. Towards the East, the topographical conditions were exceedingly difficult, because along the entire western coast of the Red Sea there are steep mountain ranges, which prevent free access to the beach, and the width of the sea, in that area, would not allow a rapid evacuation of the rebel forces and their families to the other side of the sea. Towards the south there were Egyptian army guards scattered to secure the roads all the way to Kush. These guard units were not big, but they were able to hold the rebels until a reinforcement of greater forces could arrive. And Moses could not rely on slaves without a military experience to compete with a well-trained Egyptian army. The only way that was vacant and free from the army was the road heading West. This path could have given the rebels a reasonable chance of withdrawing from Egypt and retreating into the desert before the Egyptian war chariots would successfully reach them.

This choice, of course, was difficult, effectively distancing the tribes of the Hebrews from their destination. But it also had some advantages. Moses wanted to avoid colliding with the Egyptian army, which was well equipped with war vehicles, and he needed at least a few days until he reached an area where the war vehicles were ineffective. And that is what the desert offers: sands. The second advantage was that by staying in the desert, which does not have densely populated settlements, it would give Moses and the other peoples' leaders sufficient time to train an army and get organized as a nation. A small clue for this explanation, we may find in verse 17, Chapter 11 in the book of Exodus, which briefly explains the decision of not turning towards the land of the Philistines. And the reasons for this decision were as follows:

"When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near. For God said, "Lest the

people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt."

The only way that ensured the withdrawal of the Hebrews from Egypt, without war, was the road leading to the Sahara Desert. This road was chosen by Moses to lead his people and the multitude that accompanied him to a life of freedom in their homeland. Such a decision was strongly related to a daring and far-reaching leadership capability. However, the suffering of the Hebrews from their enslavement in Egypt probably reached such dimensions, that the people agreed to do anything needed just so they will be freed.

After a decision was made, and all preparations were ready for the rebellion, Moses decided to use the secret weapon, the system of Miracles that landed all the plagues on Egypt. For his assistance he used his famous hiking pole and the mightiest weapon possible to operate against Egypt, the Nile River. To understand how the Nile can be used as a weapon against Egypt, we will devote a few words to this great river, which holds in its streams the life and death of the entire Nile Valley.

The Lower Nile, which flows through Egypt, is formed from the connection of two large rivers, the Blue Nile, originating from Lake Tana in the Ethiopian Mountains, and the White Nile originating from Lake Victoria in central Africa. These two rivers and the springs that flow to them connect near Khartoum in Sudan and flow as one river into the Mediterranean Sea. At the end of the spring season, the Nile overflows and floods large areas in Egypt, and irrigates the cultivated fields. The tide is mainly caused by the Blue Nile, which during the rainy seasons in Ethiopia receives large amounts of water that join into a massive current. The tide of the Nile was so important to Egypt's economy, that in very ancient times Egyptian scholars developed methods of stargazing and calculating calendars to know with precision the expected timing of flooding, and the preparations that needed to be made in facing it. In the upper Nile areas there were observation and measurement points, from where the news about the rise along the river's flow came from. According to this information the supervisors, who were responsible for water distribution, knew how and where to direct the flow. If the flow were too small, the water would be directed to storing lakes, which were under supervision and allowed the water to be distributed into fields. And if the flow were too strong and dangerous, openings on the banks of the Nile would be released to direct excess water to large water reservoirs, which prevented dangerous floods.

It is interesting to bring here a short summary from the writings of the

Arab traveler Ibn Battuta, who lived in the mid-14th century, and described the behavior of the Nile. The Nile, says Ibn Battuta, exceeds in size and water quality all the rivers in the world. There is no other river whose waters is being taken advantage of more so than the waters of the Nile, which is also called a sea. The tide starts in June, and when it reaches sixteen Amoth (1 Amha ~ 0.5 meter) the tax to the Sultan is paid in full. If the rise goes up to seventeen Amoth, it is a sign that there will be wealth in the country. But if it passes eighteen Amoth, there occurs a flood that causes damage to the fields, and epidemics break out. And if the tide reaches only fourteen Amoth, the people begin to pray, for then the earth is expected to starve.

Even in a very early periods, the Egyptians paid close attention to regulating the flow of Nile waters to take full advantage of its benefits and prevent floods into populated areas. The measures taken by the Egyptian authorities included raising the banks of the Nile to prevent water outbreak, circling cultivated fields with high barriers to hold the flood waters in them, and digging irrigation channels that transported the water from one field to another. In addition, dams would be built for water reservoirs in different places, using them to accumulate water for arid periods. This accumulation made it possible to extend the period of agricultural crops and to harvest twice a year. And since the Egyptians were experts in the engineering of dams, they built along the river control dams and emergency dams, which during dangerous flood were opened to conduct excess of water into large drainage reservoirs and prevent the water from flooding inhabited areas. These drainage basins became large lakes, where much vegetation grew, especially reeds. The basins would dry out during low-water seasons and serve as meadows. Signs of the presence of such drainage basins which became lakes are found in several locations along the Nile, particularly on the west bank.

During the high tide, between June and September, the Nile water would gradually rise, and through a complicated system of irrigation canals, it flowed into the cultivated fields. The fields were underwater for two month and when the tide declined, they were ready for seeding. The moisture that the fields absorbed, while they were underwater, was enough for the entire grain-growing season that took place in the winter and spring months. The crops would start ripening in April, and they would be harvested before the next tide came in.

At a time when the fields were flooded with water, the Egyptian

authorities placed military personnel to strictly guard all the dams and prevent any potential harm. The reason for this strict safeguarding will be understandable if we remember that all the dams and protective dikes were built of soil. Therefore, once the smallest crack is breached, the water flowing through it begins to scrape the dam soil, and dam destruction occurs very quickly. Small flow turns within the blink of an eye into a massive flood sweeping through dams, barriers, and settlements, and causes a catastrophe over the entire country.

Moses was probably well acquainted with the emergency dam system and the methods of regulating the Nile flow, and knew the whereabouts of the reservoir lakes. When he made up his mind to liberate the enslaved tribes from Egypt, he decided to sabotage one of the main dams, bring a flood onto Egypt, and create a commotion that would prevent the Egyptian army from pursuing the chase. To ensure that if a military force arrived it would not be able to chase the escapees, Moses decided to break through one of the Nile's emergency dams and flood the "Sea of Reeds."

After all preparations for the rebellion were completed, Moses set the zero hour to midnight, on the fourteenth of Nissan, of the 430th year that the Israelites stayed in Egypt (Exodus 12: 40,41). He prepared the demolition squad at the deployment points, and ordered the Israelites to stay home, eat dinner quickly, and be ready to go. And the Israelites ate their last meal in Egypt "in a prep condition," as described in verse 11, Chapter 12 of the book of Exodus:

"In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD's Passover."

And at midnight the signal was given. In the light of a full moon on the 14th of Nissan, Moses lifted his pole, and signaled the demolition squad to storm the great dam, whose destruction would cause a flood in Egypt. He then "*Struck the Egyptian*" who was on the lookout guard, and the demolition team began preparing for the dam's destruction. While they were at work, Moses gave the signal to the Israelites to go to the concentration locations, which were in one of the dry drainage basins, and the Israelites passed through it all night "*in the dry*." When the Israelites completed the basin crossing, Moses lifted his pole again, giving the demolition squad the signal to complete their operation. The water immediately flooded the drainage basin, creating a large "Sea of Reeds" that even Pharaoh's chariots could not

pass through.

Moses in Command of Nile Dam Destruction

If we carefully examine the ten plagues that Egypt was “struck” by, and we will take off the list those that are nature’s regular phenomena, we will discover that seven of the ten plagues are the direct result of epidemics caused after each major flood. Flying locusts that cause “darkness” are a frequent phenomenon in Egyptian regions. Although “hail” is not a normal phenomenon in this area, it is certainly possible. The rest of the plagues, which are described in the Bible with an impressive literary talent, are delivered to us in a surprisingly logical order of events that occur because of a flood.

The Israelites were not affected by the floods, nor could they see the horrific aftermath, because they were already far away in the desert. The colorful descriptions of the ten plagues, as presented in the book of Exodus,

must have been taken from other floods, which were witnessed by the Israelites, during their stay in Egypt. We will try to review the seven "plagues" that are a direct result of a catastrophe caused by a flood.

"Blood" is a pictorial description of the Nile which is sweeping during flood a great quantity of tin, and its water becomes red as blood. The book of Exodus also says, in fact, that only the Nile became blood.

"And struck the water in the Nile, and all the water in the Nile turned into blood. And the fish in the Nile died, and the Nile stank, so that the Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile. There was blood throughout all the land of Egypt." (Exodus 7: 20, 21)

"Frog" is a natural and logical consequence of any flood that leaves big ponds in which the frogs multiply. In the hot climate of Egypt's, the reproduction of frogs could be a quick process and become a disturbing "plague."

"Lice." In poor sanitation conditions, when dead bodies of cattle which were swept by the flood decomposed in the fields, this served as food for insects and mice. It is natural for insects to multiply and together with them the lice cause many other diseases.

"Arov." We cannot explain exactly the nature of this "plague." It is commonly interpreted as destructive animals that have been spread out in Egypt, or a mixture of animals. However, logic suggests that "Arov" is one of the intestinal diseases that breaks out in every flood and is caused by the contamination which erupts. This phenomenon is also well known, nowadays, when in the wake of a flood epidemics of typhus, dysentery, or cholera break out, and they are all accompanied by strong diarrhea. Indeed, the Bambara language helps us verify this assumption.

In today's Bambara, there are two terms that can be related to "Arov," and both indicate the effects that are associated with intestinal diseases. The first term is WORO, which means "vomiting," and it is one of the symptoms of a cholera disease; and the second term is URU-N-DUN, which means "intestinal scorching." But the latter term consists of two words: URU (Arov), which means to "slip," and DUN meaning "in depth" or "to the bottom." N serves as a connecting consonant. Therefore, the exact interpretation of the word URUNDUN will be "slipping into the bottom," or diarrhea, and this word remains in the Bambara language as a mark for intestinal scorching. However, it is worth noting here that Bambara has one more word, which may suggest that the meaning of Arov may also mean

“predator animals”, because WARA in Bambara means “wild animals.” But it is likely that “Arov” refers to cholera, a disease that is accompanied by diarrhea and vomiting.

“Dever” is a disease spread by rats and is the side effect of the “Lice” plague.

“Shchin” is a skin disease, a normal phenomenon in poor sanitation and declining health conditions that prevail after a flood.

“Death of the first born.” The flood that Moses attacked Egypt with resulted in devastating consequences. Not only were the grain-storage warehouses destroyed, and the country was in hunger, but even the grains that were ripe and ready for harvest were washed away. Egypt was left without food, and hunger was expected for a long period. In the years of famine, pregnant women and children suffer the most, and as a result many infants died.

There is no doubt that the plague that struck Egypt, as result of the flood, brought incredibly sad consequences and great suffering for many innocent people. But when a nation fights for its existence by means of a desperate attempt to free itself from cruel slavery, it probably has no other way of achieving freedom.

Moses and the rebel leaders knew that the journey to Canaan would last for many years. It was clear to them that slaves can excel in a desperate act once but are unable to run a country and continuously keep it safe. They needed national unity that would rally them around a common goal; a civil constitution that would regulate their relationships among themselves and between them and the mixed crowd who joined them on the journey; and a military and police organization that could protect the people and monitor order. Without all of these and without a strong, trained, army, they might collapse in their first military engagement, disintegrate, and end up being re-enslaved.

Although the first organizational actions were carried out during the preparations for the uprising, they were necessarily improvised operations that only fit an emergency for a short period of time. Without them it would have been impossible to guarantee the success of the revolt and the follow-up withdrawal from Egypt. A vanguard force had to be established ahead of time to secure the progress of the journey and leave clear road signs in the direction of the walk; a trailing corps was also needed to deal with the handicapped and prevent the convoy lagging from the back; and side-wings

security forces were needed to secure the main body. But to thoroughly be able to get organized, the Israelites needed to quickly reach a safe location, allowing them to stay there for a prolonged time without the fear of being attacked by hostile forces. And such places could be found in the Sahara Desert in many locations.

The Sahara Desert, which is the largest desert in the world, was not always as deserted and dry as it is today. Researchers studying the history of settlements in the desert discovered much evidence that there were rivers and large lakes in the Sahara, rich with vegetation and a diverse world of animals. Although there are large areas of migratory sands in the Sahara Desert that have been dry for tens of thousands of years and were never suitable for dwelling, in the center and the south part of the desert there were many areas that even during the process of drying allowed people to exist there and find their livelihood in them. In the Hoggar Mountains, many rivers flowed and streamed into great lakes whose signs may be seen even today. On the shores of these rivers and lakes there were settlements of fishing tribes, hunters, herders, and farmers who found their livelihoods there. Remains of the harpoons used for fishing, and stones which were used to crush the grain seeds, attest to the existence of many settlements in places that today are completely arid. But the most interesting testimonies about the existence of many tribes in the Sahara are those called “rock art.” These rock art marking, many of which were made with surprising artistic talent, are scattered all over the desert, describing events from social life, the economy and culture of the tribes that lived or passed by the Sahara in ancient times. The expressive accuracy of the art markings is so great that they sometimes present visual resemblances to the people of tribes who still live in the Sahara today, who are probably the descendants of ancient tribes that lived there. There are even cases where you see women’s hairstyles that are remarkably like the hairstyles of women currently living in the Sahara, indicating that fashion in the desert has not changed much in the past period from the time of the rock art markings to this day.

The drying of the Sahara Desert lasted for years, and the desert reached its present state about 1,500 years ago. One of the interesting testimonies, which may perhaps indicate that even five centuries ago the climate conditions in the desert and its surrounding areas were different than they are today, can be found in the attempts of the Songhai King, Sonni Ali, to dig the 300-kilometer canal to Oualata. Perhaps in that period there have been other lakes

in the area that he wanted to connect with the canal, or the tide of the Niger River was much higher and flooded areas adjacent to Oualata.

The spread of dryness in the Sahara encompassed large areas and forced many tribes to migrate in their search for new water sources. However, there are several places that remained in the desert where springs or wells were found. They continued to provide water, and around them remained small settlements that inhabit the famous oases up to the present. The greatest concentration of such oases, as well as larger settlements, is found in the Hoggar Mountains area, which is in central Sahara, and in the nearby Fezzan Mountains.

Some of these settlements were very ancient, and probably existed during the period when the Israelites left Egypt. They were heading towards these settlements, hoping that they might be used as organizing bases. Here they could gain strength to continue their journey, train their military, and receive basic guidance in civil law and national discipline. Presumably, a few months after they left Egypt they were already at those bases.

Tribes on migration disperse in their walks over great distances. Even if we assume that the number of Israelites who left Egypt, *"... six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children" (Exodus 12: 37),* was highly exaggerated, there is no doubt that the spread of the convoy was several dozen kilometers long. And in order to ensure that the rear of the convoy reached the same place as the front, the Israelites needed experienced guides, and the journey had to be well organized, with effective means of communication and clear road signs. Evidence of the effective organization, the established communication signs, a detailed assignment of roles, and a search for guides, we find in Chapter 10 of the book of Numbers, which sounds like a modern operation preparing for a military campaign. At the top of the marching order there were clear communication signs for camping time and travel:

"The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Make two silver trumpets. Of hammered work you shall make them, and you shall use them for summoning the congregation and for breaking camp. And when both are blown, all the congregation shall gather themselves to you at the entrance of the tent of meeting. But if they blow only one, then the chiefs, the heads of the tribes of Israel, shall gather themselves to you. When you blow an alarm, the camps that are on the east side shall set out. And when you blow an alarm the second time, the camps that are on the south side shall set out. An alarm is to

be blown whenever they are to set out. But when the assembly is to be gathered together, you shall blow a long blast, but you shall not sound an alarm." (Numbers 10: 1-7)

Later in the chapter, a detailed assignment of roles is described, the order of the journey is detailed, and the commanders are selected. The commander of the vanguard force is Nachshon, the son of Aminadav, from the Tribe of Judah. The supervisors of dismantling the Tabernacle and carrying it along are the sons of Gershon and the sons of Merari, and finally the Dan tribe under the command of Ahiezer the son of Ammishaddai is assigned to be the assembling Corps. After all travel arrangements have been made, Moses seeks an experienced guide and reaches out to Hobab, the son of Reuel:

And Moses said to Hobab the son of Reuel the Midianite, Moses' father-in-law, "We are setting out for the place of which the LORD said, 'I will give it to you.' Come with us, and we will do good to you, for the LORD has promised good to Israel." But he said to him, "I will not go. I will depart to my own land and to my kindred." And he said, "Please do not leave us, for you know where we should camp in the wilderness, and you will serve as eyes for us" (Numbers 10: 29-31)

There is no doubt that the organizational talent, which so clearly established the communication signs for the journey, the gathering of commanders, and the direction of the walk, also used fixed road signs that the vanguard force had left on its way to give instructions for the direction of progress, or to warn the followers about dangers. These marks were recorded on rocks, which were found along the way, and some of them can be seen today as "rock art" in the Sahara.

It is hard to determine the exact age of all the rock arts that were found in the desert, because there are no other discoveries, alongside with them, that may assist in that. However, some of the rock art markings attest to a remarkably high artistic level, and to the ability to maintain in the marking a natural ratio between body organs of humans and animals. Such ability may be achieved only after many years of experience, and since in some of the markings there is an obvious Egyptian influence, they may have been marked by those who specialized earlier in marking, like the decorations in Egyptian temples.

Among the many rock arts, which were discovered in the Sahara Desert, there are some that show a cow carrying the sun ball in between its horns, symbolizing the Egyptian goddess Hathor. And it is possible that the "mob"

who joined the Hebrews on their way out of Egypt used such art markings to hold their religious rituals. Other markings show a war vehicle whose horses are in a state of a "Flying Gallop," indicating, without doubt, a chase. The art markings of the Flying Gallop are usually attributed to mysterious tribes called "Garamantes," the nature of whom no one knows. The only source that was established is the writings of Herodotus, who in the 15th century BCE talked about the existence of such tribes in the Sahara. However, since some of the rock art markings are assigned to a period which fits the time of the Israelites' Exodus from Egypt, it is possible that the galloping war vehicle portrays the chase of the Egyptians after the fleeing Hebrews, and serves as a kind of expression of victory, as described in the book of Exodus. But it is also possible that the marking of a galloping war vehicle served as a warning sign for those who were following the guides in the convoy, that at some point they might meet an Egyptian war vehicle and should avoid walking there. In other places, the rock art markings show figures of people who resemble Canaanites or Israelites as they are commonly described in ancient paintings.

It is difficult for us to determine today, 3,200 years after the Israelites left Egypt, the exact route on which they walked in the Sahara. However, they likely chose the shortest route that led them to a safe and easy-to-identify place of gathering, which had water sources. And if we try to draw such an approximate route, based on the descriptions and names that are found in the Bible, we discover that many of the names that appear in Chapter 33 of the book of Numbers (as listed at the end of this chapter) exist on the route until this day. Some of the names are in fact slightly changed, and they also do not appear on the approximate route in the same order in which they were written in Chapter 33. However, these deviations are not so great as to obscure the identity of the places, and changing the order in which they appear on the route is a natural result of the time that elapsed from the point at which the events occurred until they were written about in a book.

From their departure place in Egypt, around the Temples of Abu Simbel, the Hebrews went west towards the Selima Oasis (Elim).

"And they set out from Marah and came to Elim; at Elim there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, and they camped there." (Numbers 33: 9) "And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night." (Exodus 13: 21)

From this we may conclude that the general direction of the journey was set West, and that God activated for the Hebrews the Emi Koussi volcano, which lies in the Tibesti mountains. This volcano, now inactive, rises to an altitude of 3,400 meters, and the diameter of its crater reaches 15 kilometers. When the volcano was active, its flames were visible at night from great distances, and could be used by the Israelites as a landmark for their way of progress. And during the day when the flames were not seen, there were rising fumes, which formed a cloud over the crater, and were used "*to lead them along the way*."

They probably could not make their way straight to Emi Koussi, and had to head, first, to El-hawaria "*Pi-hahiroth*" *(verse 7)*, which is northwest of Selima, and from there they headed southwest, reaching Elysian "*camped at Alush*" *(verse 13)*, which is in the Tibesti region. There is a lot of water in this area, and the place could have served as a temporary base for organizing the journey, but was probably not suitable for an extended stay, and the Hebrews decided to continue to the center of the Sahara.

The Route the Israelites Took from Egypt to Canaan

From Elysian, they headed north in the direction of Wadi al Hayaa ("*Iyim*," *verse 45*) and continued on to the southern Ubari ("*Iye-abarim,*" *verse 43*). From there they went to Madroosa ("*Rissah,*" *verse 21*), and reached their camping area in Magedúl ("*Migdol,*" *verse 7*), which is located in the water-rich Fezzan Mountains. Not far from Magedúl there is the Attaba Stream, which is probably "*Jotbathah*" *(verse 33)*. As Deuteronomy Chapter 10, verse 7 states: "*... a land with brooks of water*." And we have already seen before that "*... a land with brooks of water*" was not in the Sinai desert, or the Negev (the southern Israeli desert), when the Hebrews passed through them, but could well have been in Attaba Stream, which probably had at the time a lot more water than it does today.

From the Attaba Stream, the Hebrews continued to go north, reaching "*Kibroth-hattaavah*" *(verse 17)*, meaning in Hebrew "graves of lust", to which we would devote a few words.

On the exit of the Israelites from Egypt, there were many people who joined them, who were called "*Erev Rav*" (meaning in Hebrew "mixed multitude of mob"). These were people of other nations, who joined the Hebrews after the success of the uprising and agreed to accept the national discipline and the laws of Moses' religion. (GERE in Bambara means "getting close," and that is probably the origin of the present Hebrew words Ger ("foreigner"), Erev ("mixed"), and Karev ("close")). Later in the journey, some of the "Erev Rav" apparently regretted leaving Egypt and began to harass Moses and the other leaders of the people and demanded to return them to their country. This downturn, which apparently developed because of the difficulties that were encountered in the desert journey, also affected some of the Israelites, who joined the demands of the "mob." Moses' mission of managing and organizing all the tribes into one cohesive nation must have become exceedingly difficult. Chapter 11 of the book of Numbers describes the situation Moses was subjected to very dramatically:

"Now the rabble that was among them had a strong craving. And the people of Israel also wept again and said, "Oh that we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we ate in Egypt that cost nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic" (verses 4, 5).

And for some unclear reason, when the Israelites ate the "quail" that landed near them (verses 33, 34).

"While the meat was yet between their teeth, before it was consumed, the anger of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD struck

down the people with a very great plague. Therefore, the name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had the craving" (verses 33, 34).

In the early 1930s, a huge tomb system of about forty thousand tombs was discovered in the Wadi al-Ajal, in the Fazzan Mountains region. The period of the tombs is attributed to the 3rd millennium BCE, and it may be assumed that when the Hebrews arrived there, some of the tombs were already there. But it is also possible that part of this large cemetery constitutes the same "graves of lust" used to bury the mobs and the Israelites who rebelled against Moses.

From the lust tombs in the Ajal River area, the Hebrews turned to Northern Ubari Region *("mountains of Abarim," verse 48),* and reached Ghat, which is probably *"Dibon-gad" (verse 45).* The name *Dibon* is mentioned a few times in the Bible. It usually refers to a place: "*And the people of Gad built Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer*" *(Numbers 22: 35);* but once the name Dibon also appears as a sacrifice pronoun. *"He has gone up to the temple, and to Dibon, to the high places to weep" (Isaiah 15: 2),* and in ancient Hebrew (Bambara) Divon means sacrifice. But it can also be interpreted as a "water flow" or "waterfall," because DYE means water, and sometimes the same word is used to refer to blood, and BON means pouring. The name "*Dibon-Gad*" may therefore indicate the "Waterfall of Gad" or Ghat, which is in a mountainous area on the border with Libya and Algeria, and when the Israelites passed by there it probably still had waterfalls.

From Ghat the Hebrews went to Monte Iharen, which is located in the Hoggar Mountains region, which is possibly *"Mount Hor" (verse 42).* In verse 37 of the same book it says, *"And Aaron the priest went up Mount Hor at the command of the LORD and died there." Mount Hor* is therefore Hoggar mountains, and it is possible that Monte Iharen is the same location in *Mount Hor* mountain where Aharon the priest was buried.

From Monte Iharen, the Israelites went to the Igharghar river (*"Hor-haggidgad," verse 32*), passed near Tademaït highland (*"Diblathaim," verse 46*), and reached a camping site near Mount Tahat *("And they set out from Makheloth and camped at Tahath," verse 26),* which is the highest mountain in the Hoggar mountains region (*"Hor Hahar"*).

In this area, which is located, as implied, a few months walking distance from Egypt, the Hebrews apparently had a long camping stop. The place was free of enemies, and had plenty of water and grazing fields, which allowed

the tribes to rest, gain power, and to organize themselves to continue the journey.

After the tribes rested and got organized for the rest of the journey, they headed south towards the Niger River, and for the first time they discovered the mysterious food "Manna," which is described in the Bible in specific pictorial language. The origin of the "Manna" name is the question "Ma" in Hebrew ("what?"), and the Bible explains it very nicely. When the Israelites first saw this strange fruit, they asked admiringly *"What is it?"* or as verse 16 describes it, in Chapter 17 of the book of Exodus:

"When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, 'What is it?' For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, 'It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.'"

And verse 31 of that Chapter gives a fully accurate description of the fruit, which leaves no doubt about its nature:

"Now the house of Israel called its name manna. It was like gad seed (ZERA), white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey."

In ancient Hebrew (Bambara) ZARA means watermelon or melon, KAD is an abbreviation for the adjective KA-DYE, which means white. This implies that "Manna" is a fruit similar in shape to a watermelon or melon and tastes sweet. Indeed, in the tropics of Africa, a fruit called papaya grows, which exactly fits the description in the Bible. It is a fruit as big as a melon that sometimes tastes "*like wafers made with honey,*" and the Bambara tribes eat it every day and continue to call it MAN-DYE, which means "white Manna." From the adjective KA-DYE, the Hebrews kept KAD (meaning "vase") and the Bambara tribes kept DYE, which today also means "white."

It is interesting to note that the Bambara tribes have one other type of Manna, which may be somewhat suitable to fit the "Manna" that is described in the Bible. They call it "Man Koro," which means "ancient man," and it differs from MAN-DYE. However, its larger size may also fit the description "*like gad seed (Zera),*" and this is the fruit of mango. Both fruits are usually eaten as baked cakes, and after a long journey through the desert there is no doubt that their taste is indeed "*like wafers made with honey.*" But it should not be surprising, regarding the Hebrews, that after they ate enough from it to be full, they complained before Moses to say:

"But now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at." (Numbers 11: 6)

Also verse 14, Chapter 16 in the book of Exodus, fits nicely to the two

fruits called “Manna.”

“And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground.”

In a season when the fruits are ripe, they drop out in large quantities from the trees. During the day, when the fruits that dropped down to the ground remain in the background in the grass, they do not stand out as much, and it is sometimes hard to see them from afar. But early in the morning an interesting sight is revealed. Dewdrops wrap the fruit with very tiny drops, which look from afar as if the frost covers all the fruit.

And to conclude the discussion of the “Manna” subject, we will mention one more of its type which is called by the Bambara tribes “Man-Cala,” which means “Manna stick,” which describes a sugar cane.

After the Israelites reached the Niger River area, they seemed to like it very much, and they decided to make it a base for comprehensive organizing and a prolonged stay. Compared with the difficulties they had encountered on their way south from mountain Tahat, this place was undoubtedly heaven. There are indications that in ancient times there were several great lakes between the Hoggar mountains and the Niger. Perhaps at a time when the Israelites were in the area, they could not turn straight south, and had to bypass one of the *“Seas of Reed.”* From the Tahat mountain they therefore turned westerly to Trarza *(“And they set out from Tahath and camped at Terah,” verse 27)* and continued south towards the Bakoy River, which is one of the springs of the Senegal River. On their way they crossed a valley where they were attacked by snakes and *fiery serpents*; the name of the valley is “Vallée du Serpent” to this day.

Chapter 21 in the book of Numbers, which was probably written many years after the Israelites left Egypt, and probably written according to a tradition that was preserved in the people’s memory, describes the event of the snakes and the serpents, but it distorts it a bit at the end of the story. This indicates that at the time of writing about the events, the authors were no longer so familiar with the locations of all the sites mentioned in the book, and they probably thought that most of them were beyond the “*Edom Mountains*”. Thus, Chapter 21 describes the attack of the snakes:

“From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom. And the people became impatient on the way. And the people spoke against God and against Moses, ‘Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and

we loathe this worthless food.' Then the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died. And the people came to Moses and said, 'We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you. Pray to the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us.' So Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said to Moses, 'Make a fiery serpent and set it on a pole, and everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live.' So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live." (Numbers 21: 4-9).

After the Israelites passed the "Serpent's Valley," and arranged for an extended stay in the area of the Rivers Bakoy and Niger, they decided that the place was suitable for the construction of the Tabernacle that will house the Ark of the Covenant and approached the work very vigorously. Indeed, the place was particularly suited to that. Because according to the detailed descriptions of building of the Tabernacle, as presented in Chapters 25 to 27 of the book of Exodus, they could not build the Tabernacle in Sinai. From the descriptions we learn that the Tabernacle required many expensive materials, which are ample in this area. For molding the two *Cherubs* ("Angels") and the lamp, and to coat the trees from which the Holy Arc and the pillars of the Tabernacle were made of, required large amounts of gold. And since the area is located around "Wangara," which we mentioned earlier, the gold was abundant among the Hebrews, and Moses initiated a fundraising and asked the people to donate gold for the construction of the Tabernacle, every person as much as he can:

"And this is the contribution that you shall receive from them: gold, silver, and bronze." (Exodus 25: 3)

And the people responded willingly to Moses' call and donated a plentiful amount of gold, but the construction required special wooden panels whose measures were impressive:

"*Ten cubits shall be the length of a frame, and a cubit and a half the breadth of each frame.*" *(Exodus 22: 16)*. In our dimensions it would be a beam that is about four meters long and about sixty centimeters wide. And clearly in the Sinai Desert you could not find trees from which it would be possible to produce wooden beams of the required size. However, near the virgin forests such trees were found in large number.

The Tabernacle had large dimensions if the length of its sheets was twenty-eight qubits, which is about eleven meters long. The upper part of the

Tabernacle should have been entirely covered with skins of animals, which could also be found only in tropical Africa. The snakes are giant, six or seven meters long, and residents of the area often use their skins for various purposes even today.

When the work of building the Tabernacle seemed to be about completed, all the craftsmen came to Moses to plan the next action:

"So that all the craftsmen who were doing every sort of task on the sanctuary came, each from the task that he was doing, and said to Moses, 'The people bring much more than enough for doing the work that the LORD has commanded us to do.' So Moses gave command, and word was proclaimed throughout the camp, 'Let no man or woman do anything more for the contribution for the sanctuary.'" (Exodus 36: 4-6)

After the construction of the Tabernacle ended, Moses decided to dismantle the Hebrew camps and proceed to the place from which he would give the Israelites the Ten Commandments. And the area that was so favorable to the Hebrews, and where they spent an extended period of time to build the Tabernacle, he called the "*land of Havilah,*" which is a minor variation of WOLILA. The name means "go on a journey" or immigrate. The Israelites left the place, which they thought of as "heaven," to emigrate from it to their country—Canaan.

Chapter 2 of the book of Genesis, which describes heaven, says that four rivers come out of it. Two of them are well known to us, the Euphrates and the Tigris. The other two names refer to rivers that we do not know, and we do not know of their location. However, the description given to these rivers in verses 10 to 13 fits their flow and location: Wolila

"A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush."

The Senegal River has a large stream originating from northern Guinea, and its name is Bakoy, which we mentioned earlier, and is probably "Gihon". This river, along with the Senegal River, makes a large turn in a northwesterly direction, and "rotates the entire land of Kush. "*Cush,*" in this case, is a negro-inhabited land, and the ancient Hebrews thought, as well as many others did until the 18th century, that the Senegal river was one of the

streams of the Nile which flows in Kush.

The Niger River also has a large stream originating from the Fouta Djallon Mountains, and its name is Tinkisso, which was distorted to become "Pishon." This river too, together with the Niger River, is making a large turn towards the northeast and southwest, and it "*flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.*" And as we saw earlier, in "Wangarah," which is located in this area, there was a lot of gold.

After the Hebrews left the land of the "*Havilah,*" there were probably some who did not want to leave paradise, and therefore stayed and settled there, and today they consist of the Bambara tribes, who continue to maintain an ancient Hebrew tradition and speak the "Hebrew" language. And here we return, for a moment, to the custom of redeeming the son, as preserved by the Bambara tribe. Both the book of Numbers and the book of Exodus say that "*With a holy Shekel and Twenty Gera,*" and it is rightly believed that "Gera" is a coin whose value is one of the twenty parts of the Shekel. However, the Bambara tribe continues to pay for the redemption of the son "Hundred Gera," which is worth five Shekels. And the word GURU (also VURU) means a coconut, which is a highly sought-after commodity. It is therefore assumed that the value of the son's redemption "in coconuts" has already been determined as early as 3,200 years ago, and ever since then the exchange rate has not been changed. It is possible, that in later years there was a coin named GERA, but the original meaning, as I see it, is "coconut," which exists in tropical Africa.

From the land of the "*Havilah,*" the Israelites turned east, passing through the land of Bono Akan people "*Bene-jaakan*" *(verse 31)*, which at that time was probably in the south of Upper Volta. From there they moved to Sokoto (*"Succoth," verse 5*), reached Mokolo (*"Makheloth," verse 26*), and continued to Moussoro (*"Moseroth," verse 31*), which was already then in Kanem–Bornu, which was probably "*Kadesh Barnea.*" From there the Israelites went again to the volcano mountain Emi Koussi, which is the "*Sinai Mountain*" or "*Horev Mountain*", to receive the Bible from Moses. And Chapter 19, of the book of Exodus, describes it as follows:

"On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the LORD had descended on it

in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly." (verses 16-18).

The Israelites in Front of Mount Sinai

Moses went up mount Sinai (or Horev) and received the two testimonial tablets, "*two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God" (Exodus 31: 18).* But when the people saw that Moses had been late in coming down from the mountain, they turned to Aaron the Priest and asked him to make them a god.

"So all the people took off the rings of gold that were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. And he received the gold from their hand and fashioned it with a graving tool and made a golden calf. And they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!" (Exodus 32: 3, 4).

This event is believed to have taken place in Koro-Toro, which is located about 400 kilometers south of Emi Koussi. Because the meaning of Kuro-Toro is "the ancient bull" or "the ancient calf." From here they returned to

Kanem–Bornu ("*Kadesh Barnea*"), and went east to the mountainous area of El Fasher ("*Mount Shepher,*" *verse 24*) in western Sudan, descended south, and along Uganda's northern border and Kenya they circled the Mountains of Ethiopia, reaching Bab el-Mandeb, moved to the Arabian Peninsula, and headed north to the Sinai Peninsula to regroup.

Most of the wanderings of the Hebrews Tribes, from Egypt to Canaan, must have been spent in the African continent. A hint of this we have in the Chapter 16 of a book of Exodus, verse 35, which says:

"The people of Israel ate the manna forty years, till they came to a habitable land. They ate the manna till they came to the border of the land of Canaan."

And as we have seen before, they could eat the Manna only in the tropics of Africa, where the fruit grows abundantly. They could not eat it in the Sinai Desert, which was arid at the time the Israelites passed through it, because the plant could not grow there.

The Israelites' long journey, through Africa, gave them a great deal of time to consolidate the connection between the tribes and cultivate their shared traditions. Presumably, large parts of the tribes dropped out or were lost along the way, and others joined them on their journey to the promised land. And the tribes of the Hebrews, who never forced their religion on others, willingly accepted all the foreigners, who sought to bind their fate in a bright future, which is based on "*and Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*" There is no doubt that the joining of many foreigners, who until their full acceptance of the Israelites' customs continued to uphold their ancient customs, caused problems and friction. However, the solidified tradition to "*Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt" (Deuteronomy 10: 19),* overcame the hardships, and those who were accepted into the family of the Hebrew tribes became an integral part of the people, and together they came with them to Canaan.

It is possible to assume that before the tribes settled in Canaan Moses decided to delay them for some time in the Sinai, which he saw as a proper base for reorganization while repeating and emphasizing the basic principles of his Bible. Perhaps his second climb to the mountain to receive the Tablets of Stone was indeed in the Sinai.

The Book of Numbers, Chapter 33; Verses 1-49

1 *Here are the stages in the journey of the Israelites when they came out of Egypt by divisions under the leadership of Moses and Aaron.*

2 *At the LORD's command Moses recorded the stages in their journey. This is their journey by stages:*

3 *The Israelites set out from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, the day after the Passover. They marched out defiantly in full view of all the Egyptians,*

4 *who were burying all their firstborn, whom the LORD had struck down among them; for the LORD had brought judgment on their gods.*

5 *The Israelites left Rameses and camped at* ***Sukkoth****.*

6 *They left Sukkoth and camped at Etham, on the edge of the desert.*

7 *They left Etham, turned back to* ***Pi Hahiroth****, to the east of Baal Zephon, and camped near* ***Migdol****.*

8 *They left Pi Hahiroth and passed through the sea into the desert, and when they had traveled for three days in the Desert of Etham, they camped at Marah.*

9 *They left Marah and went to* ***Elim****, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and they camped there.*

10 *They left Elim and camped by the Red Sea.*

11 *They left the Red Sea and camped in the Desert of Sin.*

12 *They left the Desert of Sin and camped at Dophkah.*

13 *They left Dophkah and camped at* ***Alush****.*

14 *They left Alush and camped at Rephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink.*

15 *They left Rephidim and camped in the Desert of Sinai.*

16 *They left the Desert of Sinai and camped at* ***Kibroth Hattaavah****.*

17 *They left Kibroth Hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth.*

18 *They left Hazeroth and camped at Rithmah.*

19 *They left Rithmah and camped at Rimmon Perez.*

20 *They left Rimmon Perez and camped at Libnah.*

21 *They left Libnah and camped at* ***Rissah****.*

22 *They left Rissah and camped at Kehelathah.*

23 *They left Kehelathah and camped at* ***Mount Shepher****.*

24 *They left Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah.*

25 *They left Haradah and camped at* ***Makheloth****.*

26 *They left Makheloth and camped at* ***Tahath****.*

27 *They left Tahath and camped at* ***Terah****.*

28 *They left Terah and camped at Mithkah.*

29 *They left Mithkah and camped at Hashmonah.*

30 *They left Hashmonah and camped at* ***Moseroth****.*

31 *They left Moseroth and camped at* ***Bene Jaakan****.*

32 *They left Bene Jaakan and camped at* ***Hor Haggidgad****.*

33 *They left Hor Haggidgad and camped at* ***Jotbathah****.*

34 *They left Jotbathah and camped at Abronah.*

35 *They left Abronah and camped at Ezion Geber.*

36 *They left Ezion Geber and camped at Kadesh, in the Desert of Zin.*

37 *They left Kadesh and camped at* ***Mount Hor****, on the border of Edom.*

38 *At the LORD's command Aaron the priest went up Mount Hor, where he died on the first day of the fifth month of the fortieth year after the Israelites came out of Egypt.*

39 *Aaron was a hundred and twenty-three years old when he died on Mount Hor.*

40 *The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev of Canaan, heard that the Israelites were coming.*

41 *They left Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah.*

42 *They left Zalmonah and camped at Punon.*

43 *They left Punon and camped at Oboth.*

44 *They left Oboth and camped at* ***Iye Abarim****, on the border of Moab.*

45 *They left Iye Abarim and camped at* ***Dibon Gad****.*

46 *They left Dibon Gad and camped at Almon* ***Diblathaim****.*

47 *They left Almon Diblathaim and camped in the* ***mountains of Abarim****, near Nebo.*

48 *They left the mountains of Abarim and camped on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho.*

49 *There on the plains of Moab they camped along the Jordan from Beth Jeshimoth to Abel Shittim.*

Gallery – Joseph Eidelberg (1916 – 1985)

Grandparents Gershon and Frieda (~1865)

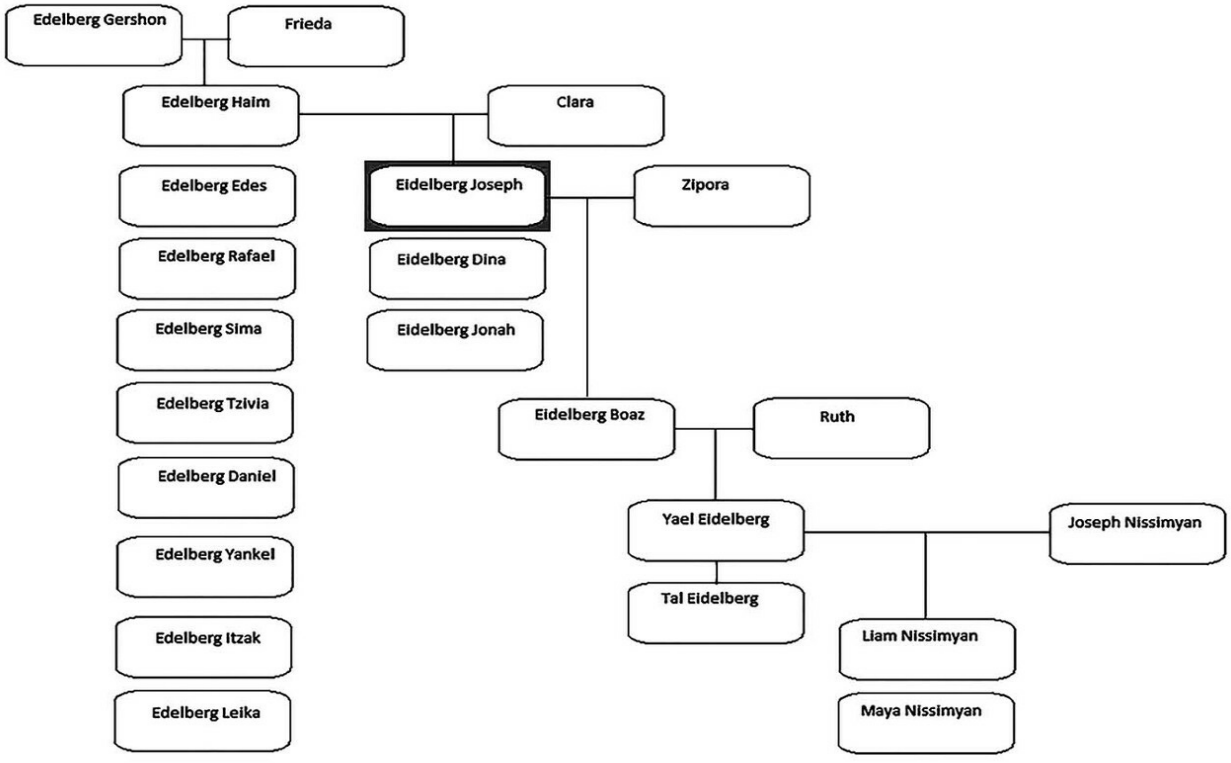
with Parents Haim and Clara (1917)

Immigration Document (1925)

Bar Mitzvah with Father Haim (1929)

With Friend in Jerusalm
(1931)

Visiting a Moslem Mosque



Family Tree

Touring Israel, Jordan, and Lebanon

… on (4 x 4) (~1934)

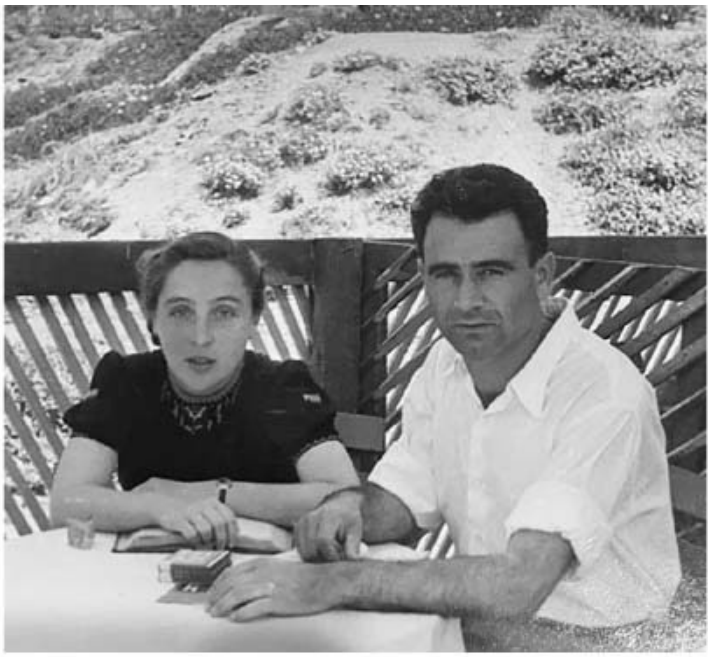
Crossing the Joran River

Serving in the British Mandate (1939)

With Belgian Shepherd Kushi

Passion of Life in Abadan (1940)

In Abadan Supporting his Father's Construction Business (1941)



Joseph and Zipora (1942)

Joseph

Zipora

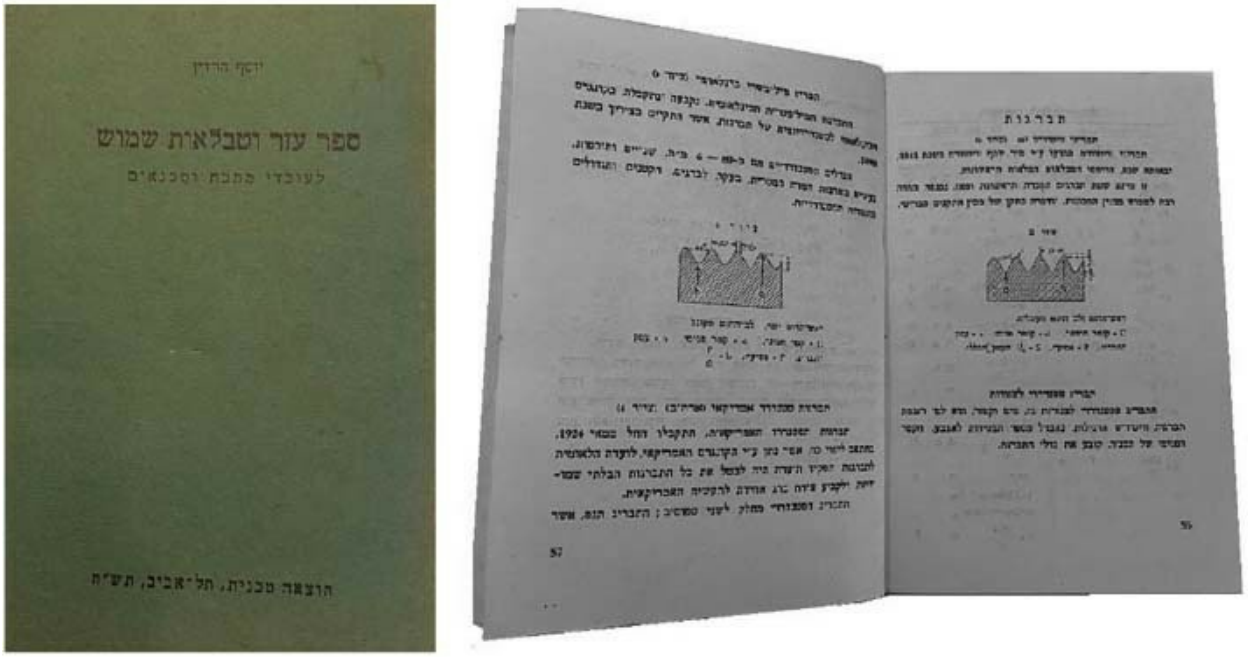
Outside a Machine Shop (1946)

Head of "Am Lohem" (Fighting Nation) (1943)

Developing Rocket Launchers

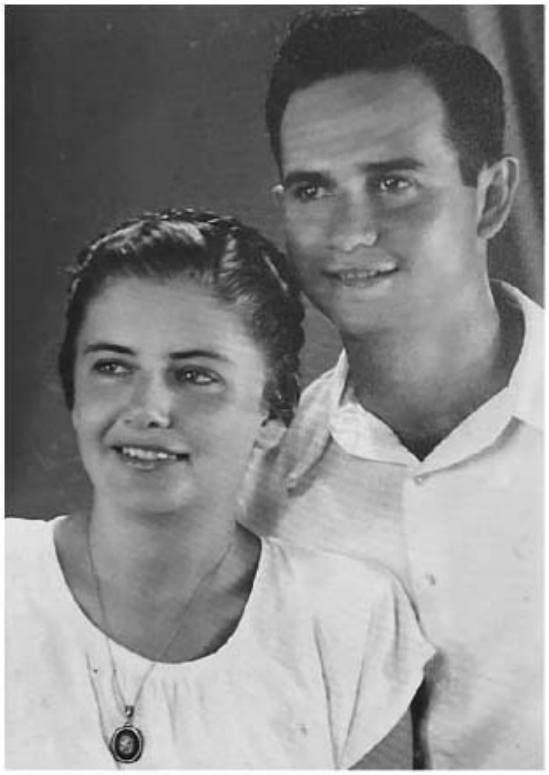
Desert Training

Machine Shop Team Members (1947)



First Published Book, Assisting Machinists and Technicians (1948)

Sister Dina, Son Boaz, Mother Clara, Joseph, Wife Zipora, and Father Haim (1952)



Brother Jonah with Wife Sarah

A Commanding Officer of Engineer Corp Base

…In Salute to the Flag

On the Go with Sargent….Kushi

Engineering Corp Equipment Ready for Deployment...

Rapid Clay Housing Construction

…Within Days

A Desert Tour with Soldiers and Family

… On the Way South, to Eilat (1950)

Paratrooper Training

… With a Jump Demonstration to Son

A Morning Solute (1953)

Base Formation

Tri State College, Angola, Indiana

… With Friends

… Studying

Graduation Day (1955)

Wife's Visit at the Dead Sea Works

Processed Potassium Conveyed

Headquarter Process Planning

Morning Team Meeting

Hosting Visitors

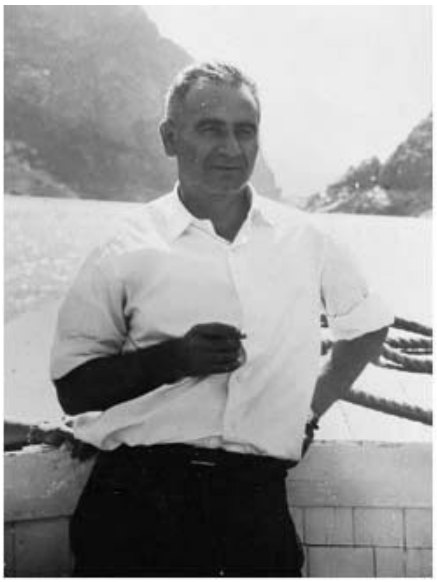
Plant Manager of the Dead Sea Works (1959)

With Friends in Persia

Dressed as a Native Persian in Isfahan

Exploring Desert Soils in Iran

on Camels for Mineral Test Samples
(1965)



Director of TAHAL Branch, Iran (1962)

Director of TAHAL branch, Ivory Coast (1968)

A Scholar in a Shinto Shrine, Japan (1971)

An Author, Haifa, Israel (1985)

Chapter 8

Israelites in their Homeland

After 40 years wandering the deserts of Africa, Arabia, and the Sinai, the Israelites came to their desired land, Canaan. Some tribes and mixed multitude who joined them on the long journey dropped out or were lost along the way, establishing settlements or small kingdoms that continued to preserve and uphold the law of Moses. But the nucleus that stood up to all the hardship along the way and reached its desired state was already a different generation than the one that left Egypt. These were no longer scared slaves who were frightened at the sight of a whip. They were a nation of free people well organized into tribes with traditions and customs that formed in their wanderings. They had a religious and social doctrine, which believes in one God, who covenanted with them and chose them to spread in the world the commandment "*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*"

Inherently the Tribes of the Hebrews were simple people, mostly shepherds, proud of their faith, loving life in nature, and despising the rituals of idol worship. And when they re-settled in their country after four centuries of slavery in Egypt and started building their own towns and villages for the first time, gradually the people became farmers. Each tribe sat at its prescribed land living its quiet life around the family, the priest, and the elders of the tribe. They had no national leaders or kings, for by nature they were disgusted by supreme rule that might impose kingdom customs of worshipping idols. Problems that arose in everyday life were brought before judges, who were chosen by the elders. The judges decided on all matters in accordance with their tradition and determined how the people should behave. Prophets were traveling from one settlement to another, preaching for maintaining social justice, and guided all the tribes in maintaining the laws that were based on the common legacy of all tribes. Even though the Ten Commandments were the Holy of Holies of the Hebrew law foundation, it took the prophets a great deal of convincing power, and a well-developed leadership of judges, to enforce the Israelites' conscience to follow the legal

laws without support from police or an army.

The generation that settled in Canaan was a generation that grew up in the desert. On their way to their settlement, the tribes of the Hebrews became known as people who were brave warriors who did not worship idols and were not afraid in dealing with armies that were bigger and stronger than theirs. However, when they arrived in their homeland after a long period of absence they encountered everywhere a foreign culture, associated with idolatry, and accompanied by debauchery feasts, from which they wished to stay away. For a long time, the Israelites lived in isolation from their neighbors and refrained from associating with them. Tired of wandering hardship and wars, the tribes were isolated, living each within its own territory and quietly dedicating themselves to cultivating their lands. The close ties that existed when the tribes were on their way to their settlement, loosened up while each tribe took care of itself without any interest or interference in what was happening with the other tribes.

For many years, the tribes lived peacefully, enjoying the glamour inherited from their ancestors. Slowly they started to establish friendly relations with some of their foreign neighbors. In the social contacts that young Hebrews had with the neighboring sons and daughters, they were fascinated, as any young person who comes from the desert to the city would be, by the glamorous life of the rituals that were associated with idolatry, and they were attracted to participate and imitate them. Although these rituals were forbidden to the Hebrews, it was difficult for them to resist their magic, and it was impossible not to be influenced by them. The young Hebrews began to be carried away in imitating their neighbors and gradually started to lose their special character and lower their moral level. However, this laxity, which was perhaps natural after a prolonged period of stress accompanied by severe discipline and wars, meant that the neighboring tribes suddenly came to know that those young Hebrews, who became famous for their toughness in the war, their courage, the purity of their virtues, and devotion to their people and values, were no longer different from any of the other tribesmen. This discovery consolidated in the neighbors an image of weakness of the Hebrews, and they began to disrespect the innocent desert people, who became farmers, and started to harass them in every possible way. The distress increased and was followed by provocations, collisions, and robberies. An accurate and picturesque description of the neighbors' treatment of the Hebrew tribes was given in one verse of the book of Judges.

"They would encamp against them and devour the produce of the land, as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance in Israel and no sheep or ox or donkey." (Judges 6: 4)

The disrespect of the neighbors of the naive Hebrews tribes, who abandoned their people's values and tried to imitate the way of life of others, reached such a level that they would let them "*plough and sow in tears,*" and when the time came for harvest, they would grab and rob their crop "*with joy*."

For nearly a century, this situation continued in which neighboring tribes mocked and abused the Hebrews. Each tribe continued to suffer on its own, taking care of its own affairs without helping any another Hebrew tribe when it was attacked and robbed. After the suffering increased and reached a level that endangered the existence of the tribes, the elders of the Israelites concluded that they must soon regroup and form all the tribes again as one nation. This involved the establishment of one central leadership, which all tribes would obey and follow its orders, and which would have the highest entrusted authority to mobilize an army and activate it at any place where the Hebrew tribes were being harassed. At that time the Israelites had a prophet and judge named Shmuel, of whom the tribes requested that he select and crown for them a king.

"Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah and said to him, "Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations." (I Samuel 8: 4, 5)

The Prophet Shmuel was not thrilled with the idea of establishing a monarchy, because he knew that it was against the spirit of the Hebrews, and he feared that a royal house, for all that it entailed, would be a burden on the people that they were not accustomed to bear. But the pressure of the elders overpowered him, and he gave in to their will and agreed to help in electing the king. And Hebrews created a monarchy for themselves with the first Hebrew king - Saul.

King Saul's reign was hard. He was a "*a handsome young man*", as (*I Samuel 9: 2*) describes him, but as a humble shepherd, with no leadership experience, he was tasked with a heavy load that was probably above his capabilities. He was destined for three primary roles: He had to quickly establish a well-equipped and well-trained national army that could deal with neighbors' armies; formulate a national discipline, independent of the tribes,

which would be subjected to one central rule; and lead the army into a war wherever the neighbors harassed the Hebrews. In addition to these roles, which were difficult in themselves, there was an additional unexpected obstacle that resulted from the differences in opinions between the young king and the old prophet. This eternal conflict between a generation of young leaders, who aspire to consolidate their rule, and an old generation of leaders, who do not willingly relinquish their status among the people, was probably one of the decisive factors in Saul's failure as a king and as a leader.

Despite the difficulties Saul encountered at the beginning of his reign, he was enthusiastically devoted to fulfilling his duties, and did everything he could to consolidate the tribes into one nation. He set up a trained army, led the people in the wars, and beat enemies who have been harassing the Hebrews. He succeeded in his main mission and the national consolidation, which he began, established the path to the creation of a powerful kingdom, and greatly relieved the sufferings of the Hebrews from their neighbors. However, his differences with the prophet tainted his spirits and he was subjected to mental crises that affected his governance capabilities as a king and a military leader. In one of his worst wars with the Philistines, he was wounded, and seeing that the campaign was lost, he did not want to fall alive into the hands of his enemies and committed suicide by falling on his sword and tearing his belly. When Saul's faithful armor-bearer saw that the king had died, he also killed himself the same way his master did.

Saul's death and the victory of the Philistines caused severe demoralization among the people, and among the Hebrew tribes severe conflicts broke out, resulting in a division and an establishment of two kingdoms. The Kingdom of Israel was ruled by the son of Saul, who was probably not beloved by the people; and the small Kingdom of Judea, which was ruled by David from his capital in Hebron. The new split once again weakened the power of the people and brought the tribes back to the state that existed before the founding of their Unified Kingdom. The neighbors returned to attack and harass the tribes, and the elders realized, once again, that the only way to sustain the integrity of the people was to reunite them around one central leadership. They turned to David and asked him to accept the leadership of the people:

"So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel." (II Shmuel 5: 3) David was a talented military man

since his early age, and during the rule of Saul, he demonstrated that he possessed leadership talents that might, once again, unite the nation. As soon as he was anointed as king, he devoted all his energy to strengthening the army and stabilizing the internal state of the unstable kingdom. As his first duty as king he considered the need to create a seamless territorial link among all the tribes' lands, which were separated in the central area by the Jebusite tribe. He conquered the city of Jebus, established his capital there, and changed its name to Jerusalem. The transfer of the Israeli capital to Jerusalem established the foundation of a new era in the Hebrews' history. A few tribes that lived till then on their own connected with a vow that was loosened, became a large and unified kingdom and an important national entity in the region.

David's reign, which was not free of internal conflicts and small rebellions that were a legacy of the past, was nevertheless successful in bringing stability to the life of the young nation. He succeeded in beating up the enemies that bothered the tribes of Israel, and greatly expanded the kingdom's borders. The people breathed a sigh of relief and could enthusiastically devote themselves to nurturing religious and cultural life. David understood that the most important factor that might rally the tribes of Israel to become one nation was their common religion and the ancient tradition based on the book of the Covenant that the people received from Moses. He decided therefore to establish a magnificent Temple in Jerusalem and to turn the city into a political and spiritual center for all the Hebrew tribes. As the first step in carrying out his plan, he transferred to Jerusalem the Ark of the Covenant, which was sacred to all tribes of Israel and which until then had been preserved in Kiryat Ya'arim near Jerusalem. And with the knowledge that the Temple would take a long time to build, he erected a temporary structure and with a great celebratory parade, where the king himself was dancing and prancing in front of the Ark, and the Ark of the Covenant was taken to its permanent place in the capital city.

Most of David's reign was spent in fighting the neighboring nations and in efforts to stabilize the kingdom and shape its political image. He could not find the time to build the Temple, but he prepared many materials for its construction and bequeathed the great duty to his son Solomon.

After the death of David, who had been a king for forty years, Solomon rose to power and inherited from his father a great kingdom, stable and unified. If until then the people were ruled by kings who were shepherds in

their childhood, this time the rule passed to the hands of a king's son, who grew up in the palace and experienced policy problems and court intrigues from his childhood. King Solomon was not an experienced army leader like his father, but he was gifted with political talent and an organizational ability that enabled him to establish friendships with the peoples of neighboring nations. He appointed representatives in all tribes of Israel, who were responsible for collecting taxes and organizing national duties. These duties, which were equally imposed on all tribes, were primarily intended for providing a workforce that was needed to build the Temple. Unlike other nations who employed slaves that were captured in wars, the Hebrews were able to do their work on their own, and each tribe sent in its quota of workers. The burden was indeed great, but this way Solomon shared with all the people the task of building the great spiritual center, which became a national asset for many generations.

As the Temple was being built, other public developments increased in the capital, and the living standards of its inhabitants rose. The great demand for art and luxury items led to the establishment of many workshops in the city and promoted internal and external trading relationships. With the help of Solomon's friend, King Hiram of Tzor, a large fleet of ships was built, which sailed in the Mediterranean and brought back to Israel any precious commodity that could be obtained abroad.

The conclusion of the Temple's construction was celebrated with great glory and inspired in the people a spirit of national pride and great satisfaction at the great accomplishment. Jerusalem, with all its glory, quickly became an important cultural and social center, that attracted guests from all the nations in the area, and there were even those who came from far away to see it. The beautiful capital of the Kingdom of Israel was a city of peace and tranquility, welcoming anyone who appeared at its gates, and infusing upon them an atmosphere of love and friendship. The Temple was open to anyone who wanted to commune with God, regardless of religion and race. There is no better description of portraying the spirit of brotherhood and peace that prevailed in those days in Jerusalem, other than King Solomon's words and prayers at the time of the Temple inauguration:

"Hear in heaven your dwelling place and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to you, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your people Israel, and that they may know that this house that I have built is called by your name." (I Kings 8: 43)

The serenity and peaceful life that prevailed in Jerusalem and the rest of the kingdom led Solomon to believe that peace and happiness would exist forever. Thinking that the country was strong and safe from enemies, he neglected his roles as leader, and began paying more attention to his private pleasures. Increasing his harem was sort of a political duty during those years, which stemmed from the many alliances he had made with his neighbors. One of the signs of friendship between the peoples at the time was marrying daughters of the kings with whom a treaty was made. However, the needs of the palace and the great harem absorbed large amounts of taxpayer money and provoked a grievance among the people over the waste. It must also be assumed, as such things always happen, that the king's behavior also affected his ministers and senior military commanders, and the security of the country and its borders was no longer strict. At the end of Solomon's days the first cracks in the stable kingdom were discovered, which then led to its disintegration. Rebellions started to occur from the inside, and the neighboring nations exploited Israel's weakness and violated the long-lasting peace that was prevailing in the area. Old conflicts resurfaced among the tribes, and with Solomon's death, after 40 years of reign, the kingdom returned to its disintegrated state. Eighty years of efforts, which were made by the reign of the Davidic line to unite the people, ended in renewed division. The division led, once again, to the establishment of two Hebrew kingdoms: the Kingdom of Israel, which included the Ten Tribes and established a separate capital for itself in Samaria; and the small Kingdom of Judea whose capital remained in Jerusalem.

Kings had been rising up, coming down, and murdered in the two Hebrew kingdoms. Each kingdom nurtured its own special lifestyle and ran a separate policy, which was sometimes aimed at harming its friend more than benefiting itself. Each king considered it his destiny to win the competition and war with his rival kingdom and ignored the dangers that were awaiting both kingdoms. In addition, the Kingdom of Israel also elevated the conflict level and deepened the separation by cultivating new religious rituals, which were against the Hebrew spirit of tradition and unity. They tried to remove their ties with the spiritual center of the people in Jerusalem as much as possible, which despite the separation continued to be a Holy City, to which the Hebrews used to go to on their traditional holidays. To emphasize the disconnection, King Jeroboam established a special holiday in Samaria, celebrated on the fifteenth of the eighth month, and which had nothing to do

with the Hebrew religion or tradition. It was probably a special "independence holiday" for the Tribes of Israel, which emphasized their complete detachment from Judea.

The Kingdom of Israel had endured difficult times and had suffered, especially from the frequent assaults by the Kingdom of Damascus, which would continually attack Israel's towns and villages that were located near its border. During the reign of King Ahab of Israel, the armies of Damascus became so strong that their King Ben-Hadad decided to conquer and destroy Israel. He surrounded Samaria with a great army, laid a siege on it, and sent messengers to Ahab demanding to hand him over all the money, the gold, and the women that were in his possession. Ahab, who was a peace-loving man and wanted to avoid war, probably thought that if he agreed to Ben-Hadad's demand and handed over his property, he would probably settle for it and return to his country. However, when Ben-Hadad saw that the king of Israel was willing to submit to his demand, and willing to pay any price for peace, he decided to increase his demands and in addition to Ahab's property he demanded that the king of Israel allow his officers to pass through the city and take all the women, silver, and gold that they pleased. This demand apparently went too far, and Ahab decided to go to war. This story is briefly described in the book of I Kings, Chapter 20 as follows:

"Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his army together. Thirty-two kings were with him, and horses and chariots. And he went up and closed in on Samaria and fought against it. And he sent messengers into the city to Ahab king of Israel and said to him, 'Thus says Ben-hadad: Your silver and your gold are mine; your best wives and children also are mine.' And the king of Israel answered, 'As you say, my lord, O king, I am yours, and all that I have.' The messengers came again and said, 'Thus says Ben-hadad: I sent to you, saying, Deliver to me your silver and your gold, your wives and your children. Nevertheless I will send my servants to you tomorrow about this time, and they shall search your house and the houses of your servants and lay hands on whatever pleases you and take it away." (verses 1-6)

And Israel went to war with the people of Aram-Damascus, defeated them severely, and spread their army in all directions. But Ben-Hadad was able to escape. A year later, Ben-Hadad accumulated a great force and once again went to war against Israel. This time too, the Israeli army defeated the Damascus armies, and Ben-Hadad was caught alive. Every other king would have probably executed Ben-Hadad and brought an end to the nuisance that

lasted for many years, but not Ahab. Being a peace-loving king, he received Ben-Hadad not as an enemy who tried several times to destroy him and his country, but as an old, distinguished friend for whom it was proper to pay a respect. He placed him in the kingdom chariot and gave him a royal tour of the city, showing him the beautiful Sameria. Ahab, in his innocence, believed, once again, that in doing so he would prove to Ben-Hadad that friendly relations and good neighborliness are better than bloodshed and wars. But Ahab was wrong. Three years later, Ahab was killed in a new war with the same Ben-Hadad, and Aram-Damascus continued harassing Israel.

Meanwhile, out of the historical skies of the East, a new star rose to power, big and dangerous, which spread quickly and conquered many small kingdoms on its way. Assyria's danger to its neighbors was so great that Aram and Israel allied themselves into a joint defense against the powerful and brutal enemy. However, this covenant was made too late and could no longer save the two kingdoms. Assyria captured Damascus and joined it into its kingdom, and Israel was forced to surrender and pay tax to Assyria. A few years later, relying on Egypt's pledge to come to its aid in the event of a war, Israel rebelled against Assyria and stopped paying it the annual tax. Assyria responded firmly and sent a large army to lay siege on Samaria. For three years, Israel fought heroically, defending its capital with all its power. But the famine exhausted the forces of warriors and the people, and in 722 BCE Israel knelt and fell. In the book of II Kings, Chapter 17, there are only two verses, 5 and 6, that describe the end of existence of Israel's kingdom:

"Then the king of Assyria invaded all the land and came to Samaria, and for three years he besieged it. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria captured Samaria, and he carried the Israelites away to Assyria and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes."

That was 2,700 years ago, and since then no one knows what happen to the Ten Tribes.

Small Judah looked horrified at the fall of its sister kingdom but could not come to her aid because of its military weakness. There must have been many thoughts of regret, which bothered Judea and Israel, for the many years wasted in civil wars, and the great suffering that happened to the two nations. But now it was too late. Judea, which was now alone, could not protect itself from the strong army of Assyria, and without a choice it surrendered and was enslaved. But despite its surrender, it was able to preserve its internal

freedom and its rule continued to be in the hands of Hebrew kings.

In that difficult time, when the people were defeated, desperate, and hopeless, great prophets started to rise, and never became tired of supporting the people. They were trying to bring in hope to the people for a bright future, which is expected for all mankind and Israel, if they only continue to follow the paths of morality and tradition. And Isaiah spoke of a vision of the future, "at the end of days," in the words whose echo sounds like a dream of mankind in all generations:

"…and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore." (Isaiah 2: 4)

"The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them." (Isaiah 11: 6)

The people listened to the words of their prophets; they recovered and began to hope for better days when peace would prevail in the world and all nations would live in peace. They enthusiastically relented to strengthening the spiritual foundations of tradition and fostering social justice. But all that lasted for only a short period of time. The politically enslaved Judea had new kings who had forgotten their past and their aspirations for a luxurious life clouded previous achievement. Instead of justice and brotherhood, oppression took place with exploitation and the aspiration to quickly become rich.

With the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel, the economic conditions of Judea became hard. Many refugees who managed to save their lives and escape the wrath of the Assyria swords, turned to the only refuge that was left for the people of Israel: small Judea. Most of them lost all their possessions in the war and came to Judea without any belongings, which imposed a heavy economic burden. However, despite the hardships and the shortages in Judea, the people welcomed their surviving brothers with open arms and shared with them all that they had. But as usual, in a state of national awkwardness and hardship, there were many who sought to exploit the plight of the people to get rich quickly without mercy for anyone. Government officials took bribes and profiteers rushed to exploit their brothers' disaster and make high profits. This time, too, a great prophet arose, one who could not watch in apathy how the people were trampled by their exploiters, and from the depths of his hurt soul he never ceased to cry out:

" Thus says the LORD…Amend your ways and your deeds… truly execute

justice one with another… do not oppress the sojourner, the fatherless, or the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place…" (Jeremiah 7: 3-7).

But Jeremiah no longer had many listeners because the government was largely in the hands of those who thought that the people were created to provide wealth to the rulers.

Judah continued to exist for 140 years after the exile of the Ten Tribes. It had periods of elation, national devotion, and social justice; and it had periods of lows, oppression, corruption, and conflicts. The wheels of history continued to turn slowly, eroding on their way peoples and cultures. Assyria was sinking into the depths of oblivion, and in its place rose the Kingdom of Babylon to the political scene of the East. Together with many other kingdoms that were under the rule of Assyria, Judah was inherited by Babylon and continued paying its new enslavers the surrender tax. The nation was tired of the prolonged enslavement in which it was held and decided to relieve itself from the burden of Babylon. They rebelled against the mighty kingdom, but its strength was not enough to deal with the strong Babylonian armies. On the 10th of the 10th month, Babylon lay siege to Jerusalem, and after a brutal war, which lasted almost a year, the strength of the defense forces weakened from war and hunger, and the Babylonian army stormed into Jerusalem. They robbed the city, burned down the glorious Temple, and exiled the nation's leaders. That was the end of the national independence of all the Tribes of Israel.

The Fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians

Seven centuries of brotherly wars, intrigues, and schisms were needed for the tribes of Hebrew shepherds to realize that a state and independence cannot be taken for granted. It was only when they were in exile that they began to understand the words of their great prophets who preached for national unity and social justice, and it was only when their country was destroyed that they came to know that an enemy sword did not distinguish between rich and poor. In a broken body and a destroyed soul, without a Temple and without political independence, the exiles began to regroup around the spiritual heritage that remained out of their destruction. And suddenly they also realized that the legacy of the Hebrews did not belong to individual tribes or elected persons, it belonged to the entire nation. And the exile that dispersed them as tribes rebuilt them as a nation. There were no

more Tribes of Israel and Tribes of Judah, there was one Hebrew Nation. And in the absence of kings, priests, and a Temple, the entire nation huddled in their places of worship and followed with dedication and discipline their teachers and leaders in exile. They thirstily stormed the Bible and studied with adherence every letter and sign, and every little clue that could have been poured into it that could mold the hope of reinstating their lost homeland.

Indeed, the people's prolonged viewing was not in vain. The Kingdom of Babylon, which destroyed the Temple, knelt before the armies of Persia and dove into oblivion. In the year 550 BCE, a new page opened in Eastern history. The young King Koresh took power in Persia and soon took over Babylon, allowing the Hebrew exiles to return to their homeland, rebuild their country, and rebuild their Temple. From all the diaspora, the Hebrews flocked to return to their homeland, and long convoys of men, women, and children shattered their feet again in the deserts. After tedious journeys they returned to their desolate country and immediately began to devote themselves enthusiastically to rebuilding the ruins, and to mobilize the means to rebuild the Temple.

Independence was not yet complete because the people were politically subordinate to the Kingdom of Persia. But this did not bother the Hebrews. For most of their efforts were aimed at rebuilding the land from its ruins and rebuilding the Temple. The renewed constitution of the state was based on the purity of Hebrew tradition, and at the head of the people were priests who had the status of kings inward, and the role of representatives outward. Before long, the Temple was rebuilt. It was not as magnificent as its predecessor, but the poor and humble people in their demands who had just returned from diaspora were delighted with the revival of the symbol of national unity. The leaders devoted all their energy and talent to instill in the people the ancient Hebrew culture, and to nurture the spiritual assets that were added to it in exile. Those sections of the nation who had not yet returned to the homeland helped those who had returned by sending many donations to the Temple and providing means to rebuild the ruins. This was 2,500 years ago.

Two-hundred years passed by, and the Kingdom of Persia was sealing off the latest historical pages of Israel's suppression by the powers of nations in the East, and Greece was opening a new page in the history of the Hebrews. The Greek King Alexander stormed across the East and subdued Persia. After

a brief period of glorious victories and many conquests, he died, and his place was inherited by some of his military officers. These officers become kings in their provinces, fighting among themselves for the division of their gains, and the Hebrews were finally included in the reign of the Kingdom of Antioch in the northern land of Israel.

In all the new kingdoms that were founded after the death of Alexander, Greece infused or imposed its culture and idols across the nations. Normally the Greeks would not encounter resistance, because a conquered nation naturally tends to accept the culture and the religion of the occupying nation. And the conquered peoples, who were already accustomed to idolatry even before the Greeks came, were not particularly dismayed by being required to replace one idol with another. In those few cases where the priests of an existing idol religion refused to conduct prayer rituals for a new idol religion, volunteers were always found to replace them. To be liked by the new rulers, they would willingly take on the role of priesthood, hoping that it would help them move up the social ladder from which they could benefit. However, when the Greeks tried to treat the Hebrews the same way as they did with other conquered peoples and wanted to impose their religion and its idols on them, they encountered a resistance they did not expect. For in the eyes of the Hebrews, who believed in one upper God, and were not allowed to represent him in a statue or a picture, idolatry has always been considered a despicable religion. The Greeks' attempts to penetrate the Hebrews' religion with brute force and law was met with stubborn resistance from all the people. Although there were individuals who were leaning to accept the new culture, most of the people believed that the destruction the Hebrews had encountered in the past stemmed from their having neglected their faith in one God, and stood on guard to prevent the idolatrous religion from desecrating the sanctity of their faith.

The Greek government did not tend to give up. They enacted cruel laws prohibiting Hebrews from abiding by their religious practices and threatened all those who dared to break the rules with a death penalty. But it was all in vain. Despite the harsh decrees, the people continued to observe their religious commandments in the underground, and many indeed did pay for that with their lives. For a long time, the people continued to suffer because they were too weak to revolt, and too strong to renounce their faith, to which they were bound with all their spirit. The Greek government saw it as the natural right of a ruler to forcibly impose his religion on the governed, and

was relentless in murdering men, women, and children for their faith. When despite the harsh persecution the Greeks failed to break the spirit of the people, they decided to undermine the sanctity of the Hebrew faith by turning the Temple into a prayer house for their idols. Now the Hebrews had nothing to lose. They saw their whole world collapse and decided to rebel.

The uprising was provoked by a family of priests from the city of Modi'in, led by Matityahu Ben Yohanan and his five sons. The rebels organized small groups of fighters who called themselves "Maccabee," which in ancient Hebrew (Bambara) means people of the revolution (MA-"man"; KA- "to"; BE-"turn-over"). The revolutionary groups dispersed in the mountains, resorting to the tactics of sudden attacks, causing losses to the enemy and making a quick withdrawal to their hideouts. The Maccabees soon became large units that operated throughout the country and fought against the regular Greek army. By sticking to their target, the Hebrews managed to strike the Greek army in the country towns and eventually expelling it from Jerusalem as well. They purified the Temple from all the idols and prepared it again for Hebrew prayers. The inauguration of the Temple and the victory celebrations lasted eight days, and in commemoration of that ancient victory, that the Hebrew spirit won against a brutal army that wanted to impose its faith with the power of weapons, Jews all over the world celebrate the feast of Hanukkah to this day.

For 25 years, the enslaved Hebrew nation fought for its cultural freedom. The war which began as a rebellion against a religious suppression ended in a full victory and political freedom. The liberated state had a supreme national council called Sanhedrin, and chose from it the first Hebrew President, who was also the High Priest. The president was granted broad powers, and the Sanhedrin would have helped him in interpreting the laws of the Torah (Bible) and advising him on political matters. The national government spanned over the entire country, and parts that were east of the Jordan river. And the country's life was relatively peaceful. Here and there, small wars or harassment would sometimes break out, but these did not bother the people in their normal life and did not prevent them from cultivating the Hebrew tradition.

Eighty years passed by, and from the West a great eagle rose high, which carried a new culture in its claws. Rome inherited Greece. Although Judah did not welcome Rome with open arms, it could not resist the rising tide of its army and became its protege. The people continued to enjoy a great deal of

independence, and Rome did not interfere with the internal problems. But one right which Rome kept for itself was to appoint and approve the selection of presidents and kings in Judea. And Rome gradually began to appoint kings who showed a tendency, and sometimes enthusiasm, to assimilate into its culture. Being more loyal to Rome than they were to their own people, they gradually tried to instill Rome's culture, which was also based on idolatry, and impose on the people customs that were foreign to their spirit. These kings became hated by the people, and here and there an opposition to their rule began to emerge. The Roman army, obedient to the discipline of the kings in charge, was eager to brutally suppress any manifestation of resistance to power. The unrest of the people increased, and in 66 CE the small nation gathered the remainder of its power, daring to rebel against the Roman Empire.

The fanatical rebels stormed the foreign armies with all their anger and despair and beat them with the remainder of their power. They won many victories and even succeeded in expelling the Romans from Jerusalem. But all of it was only for a short time. The rebellion lasted four years. Instead of the beaten legions, the Romans sent newer, stronger, legions, and in the year 70 Jerusalem was placed under siege. For many months Jerusalem held under siege, and its defenders did not surrender. They fought to the last of them, they were overcome, and Jerusalem fell. Its inhabitants were murdered or exiled, and the second Temple of the Hebrews was burned down on the ninth day of the fifth month of that year. To commemorate the important event that a mighty empire managed to destroy a handful of brave warriors, a great triumphal gate was erected in Rome, presenting to this day a relief that shows the Temple's holy instruments being brought to Rome together with captive Hebrews.

The Roman occupation of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple did not result in the surrender of the people. In many places in the country, there were pockets of resistance that remained, with warriors who refused to surrender and fought the Romans until they were overcome. One-by-one the pockets of resistance were destroyed, and fighters who managed to escape from one fortress continued to fight from another. The last pocket of resistance, Masada, was never conquered by the Romans. After a prolonged siege on Masada, its defenders chose to die by their own hands instead of succumbing to the Romans. And out of contempt for a mighty army that wanted with all its power to enforce idolatry on the Hebrews, all the

defenders of Masada committed suicide. And when the Romans finally reached the fortress, and with triumphant fanfare broke in, there was the silence of death. All the defenders were dead.

Jerusalem was destroyed and remained deserted, and in the rest of the country the Jews were brutally oppressed. Special taxes were imposed on them, and Roman rule persisted in its attempts to break the spirits of those who remained alive. But spiritual Jerusalem continued to exist. It existed in all those small settlements that remained in Israel, and everywhere in hiding in the desert where they found a refuge from their persecutors. Once again, a strong force managed to break the body, but the spirit and the soul grew stronger. And the people gave themselves more passionately to their Hebrew faith, and never ceased to hope for its resumption. Everywhere, small spiritual centers were set up that imposed national discipline on all the people, and this discipline was preserved by every individual who felt connected to the Jewish nation.

With the destruction of Jerusalem and many other settlements in Israel, the rebellion did not perish. The bitterness that had accumulated in the people's hearts was constantly looking forward to the right moment when they could become stronger and expel the Romans from their land. For 60 years the Hebrews had been patiently expecting, but the moment did not arrive. It was forced upon them when the Romans decided to rebuild the Hebrew Temple in Jerusalem and make it a shrine to their idols. In that, the few Hebrews saw the end of their hopes, and the rebellion broke out again. In this second uprising, same as in the first one, there was no chance to defeat the Roman Empire. However, the people decided that only over their dead bodies would the Temple be established as a worship place for idols.

Rebel battalions rallying from all parts of the country joined forces again to strike the Romans. The uprising was led by a magnificent hero named Bar-Kochba, who organized his army in small units that would suddenly attack the Roman armies, killing them with great might. Much of the country was liberated and Bar-Kochba even created national coins. For three years the uprising continued at the cost of many victims. But the Roman Empire was too large and powerful for it to be defeated by a handful of rebels. Instead of the defeated armies, new armies were brought in to replace them, which eventually succeeded in suppressing the rebellion.

Even the second uprising that failed did not cause the Hebrew people to forget Jerusalem and did not weaken their hope that a day would come when

they would rebuild Jerusalem all over again. In all the diaspora of exile, the Jews adhered to this faith, and kept it highly guarded. In all their years of exile, people of different nations tried to impose idolatry on them and other beliefs that were foreign to their spirit. But the nation withstood the pressures, and at times they paid for it with their lives. For 2,000 years they would be expelled from country to country, burned alive on bonfires, turned to dust in furnaces, but they refused to give up their religion and culture. Many bodies of these proud and stubborn people were scattered throughout the realms of the "enlightened" nations. With the great power of weapons, these gentiles were able to tear up the bodies of women and babies, when the men had not even a stick for protecting them. The body would have been trampled, the soul wounded, and blood was shed, but the spirit was not broken. Children were kidnaped into the army and be forced to kneel to the different culture, hoping that with children it would be easier to succeed in this task. But in vain. Wherever a Jew remained alive, a hope flickered that the day would come. Wherever babies remained alive, the parents told them about their people and taught them the strange letters of their ancient language in the hope that at some time they would speak it again in their homeland.

It is amazing how a small, scattered nation succeeded without a homeland, without a Temple and without a governing body, to keep its uniqueness and tradition for so many years. When the Temple existed, it had a special place called the Holy of Holies. In this Holy place stood a small Ark, which according to tradition accompanied the Hebrew people in all its movements in the desert. Inside this small Ark there was only two stone slabs carrying the Ten Commandments.

"There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone that Moses put there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the people of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt. " (I Kings 8: 9).

These two stone slabs made their mark so deep in the soul of the Hebrew people that to this day no one has been able to extract it from them. And the reason for the stubborn belief of the Hebrew Nation in its Holy of Holies sanctity is simple: Until now no one has found a better substitute for "*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*"

The Hebrew religion, as all other religions in the world, has undergone many changes in its existence, relating to prayer rituals and other traditional customs. From a simple natural religion of shepherd tribes, it has evolved

into impressive rituals and traditional ceremonies. Many saw the outer signs of impressive ceremonies as the main thing and sometimes forgot that the foundation element was much deeper. Indeed, there was not a single nation in all the history of mankind so dedicated to demonstrating "*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*" as the Hebrew people, who always helped their brothers and sisters wherever they met in the Diaspora. And so they managed to preserve the Holy of Holies sanctity even after the Ark of the Covenant and the Temple were lost.

When a review is made of the entire history of the Hebrews, from the time in which they became a nation until their return after 2,000 years of exile to their homeland, it encounters a strange and special phenomenon that could not be found among many other peoples. The willingness to sacrifice life for believing in the idea; national dignity; and a show of contempt for tyrants. Masada was by far the most impressive display of contempt that a people could feel for a culture that uses the power of weapons to impose its faith on others. But 1,000 years before Masada, there were already expressions of national pride by self-sacrifice. The first such a case we know of is written in the book of I Shmuel, Chapter 31, verses 4,5:

"Therefore Saul took his own sword and fell upon it. And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell upon his sword and died with him."

And this practice was acceptable to the Hebrews not only as an expression of contempt for dying at times of distress, but also was probably common as an expression of devotion and loyalty. And when Avner and Yoav each wanted to test the loyalty of their opponent's soldiers, they ordered:

"And Abner said to Joab, "Let the young men arise and compete before us." And Joab said, "Let them arise." Then they arose and passed over by number, twelve for Benjamin and Ish-bosheth the son of Saul, and twelve of the servants of David. And each caught his opponent by the head and thrust his sword in his opponent's side, so they fell down together." (II Shmuel 2: 14-16)

Even in later generations, Jews did not hesitate to sacrifice their souls for believing in their religion. And when they were given the choice to accept another religion and save their souls by doing so, or be thrown alive into a fire, there were thousands who went to the fire and preferred to die while praying in their own language, provided that they did not betray their faith.

Similar phenomena of self-sacrifice out of a national pride, like the

custom of the ancient Hebrews, are known to this day in only with one nation: Japan. And this is most puzzling, because we do not know of any connection that ever existed between the Japanese people and the Hebrew people. This similarity could be regarded as an accidental phenomenon, had the Japanese not used the ancient Hebrew word “Harakiri” to call the ritual of self-sacrifice. The Hebrew origin of the name is apparent, because HARA means “belly,” and in modern Hebrew language it has been preserved to name the belly of a pregnant woman. And KIRI means “rip,” “cut,” or “break.” The Japanese ritual called the “Harakiri” is indeed performed by tearing the stomach with a dagger.

The fact that the Japanese use the ancient Hebrew word for an ancient Hebrew custom is not enough in itself to determine that the Japanese people ever had a contact with the Hebrew people. But the fact that the word “Harakiri” consists of four syllables, and it is almost not distorted, justifies examining some phenomena from the history of the Japanese people, to determine whether the similarity with the ancient Hebrew word is only coincidental, or is it the result of an ancient connection between the two peoples. To understand the reasons for justifying historical scrutiny, we shall devote a few words to another linguistic phenomenon.

Every language has one-syllable words. And there is always a chance, though small, that there is a one-syllable word that has the same meaning and the same pronunciation in two languages whose speakers never had any contact. However, as the number of syllables in the word increases, there are fewer chances of finding words that have the same number of syllables, identical pronunciation, and similar meaning. But if indeed there is a word with many syllables in one language that is found in another language, the chances increase that between the speakers of the two language there was at one time a connection; or that both languages come from a common third language.

To explore these possibilities, we will briefly review the history of the Japanese people.

Chapter 9

The Japanese People

The group of the Japanese Islands, over 1,000 of them, extends in a wide arc east of mainland Asia. The largest of this group of islands is Honshu Island, which is about 1,000 kilometers long and its average width is 60 kilometers. The southern tip of Honshu faces from one side towards the Korean Peninsula, and on the other side it is "hugging" the eastern island of Shikoku. South of Honshu is Kyushu Island, and in the north near Sachelin is Hokkaido Island.

In these mountainous islands, which are poor in ore and whose land is only about one-sixth farmland suitable for planting, live today the Japanese people of about 100 million, who are mainly engaged in intensive agriculture, fishing, the steel industry, construction of liners, electronics, optics, and textiles. At the end of World War II, Japanese industry was severely damaged, but within a few years it was resurrected, and it is now considered one of the most advanced in the world.

No one knows for sure how, when, or from where the Japanese people came to their islands. An ancient Japanese myth tells that in 660 BCE the first Japanese king of the island was crowned, who was the son of Sun Goddess Amaterasu. However, scholars who have studied the history of the Japanese people are more likely to accept the theory that between the first and second centuries BCE, some unknown tribes sailed from the Korean Peninsula and settled on Kyushu Island and in the south on Honshu Island. When they came to the islands, they found in them small groups of primitive white-race people, who resembled in their appearance the tribes of Ainu that live in Japan to this day, and they are concentrated mainly on the northern island Hokkaido. Some of the ancient tribes of Ainu were pushed north by the new settlers, and some were assimilated into them. This merger probably created the Japanese race as we know it today. Although the Japanese people are thought to belong to the Mongolian race, there are signs found in their characteristic of the White race, and signs that indicate a connection with a

Negro race. The characters of the White race are attributed to the merger with the ancient Ainu tribes, but it is not known how to explain the origin of the connection with the Negro race.

The Japanese language, which has had many dialects from the Chinese language, is linguistically isolated from all other languages, and stands by itself. There are many differences of opinion regarding its origin, but to this day no other language has been found to show any resemblance to the Japanese language.

The new arrivals in Japan probably did not have their own writing. And if there was one, they did not use it much, so it is hard to get a clear picture about their settlement on the islands and their way of life back then. The first writings about the history of the Japanese people only appeared in the 8th century CE, after the Japanese adopted Chinese symbolic writing. However, these writings, which are called "Kojiki" and "Nihon Shoki," reflect legends that were preserved in the memory of the elders, and it is difficult to distinguish the difference between reality and imagination. The only source from which it is possible to draw a vague knowledge about the beginning of the settlement of the Japanese on the islands exists in ancient Chinese depictions, which mention wild tribes who live on the Eastern Islands.

Of all we know about the early Japanese period it can be concluded that the inhabitants who came from Korea to Japan, lived in small family groups that were headed by a priest or a priestess. These groups cultivated a strict family discipline based on traditional customs, and strictly upheld inherited social class rights. Each such group had a special place of worship, or a small temple, that excelled in its simplicity and did not name idols or statues. Their religion, called Shinto, did not foster faith in the afterlife, and its main ritual was to appeal to the gods to help them live a better life in this world, and to remember the souls of their ancestors. Their holidays were tied up with the seasons and pilgrimages to places they considered sacred. The primary findings in excavations made in ancient Japanese tombs were bronze mirrors, iron daggers, and a strange ornament made mainly of precious stone that had the shape of a comma. These objects were called "Camus," which in Japanese means, "God," and therefore it is believed that the Japanese worshipped these gods as well.

For several centuries, the Japanese people lived in isolation and were cut off from the outside world. They only had ties with the Korean Peninsula, which was considered a part of Japan for some time, and from there

additional settlers continued to arrive on the islands for many years. During their isolation, they underwent several internal crises, apparently resulting from disagreements between the tribes regarding land distribution and the determination of settlement areas. At the end of the crises, the Yamato clan gained some supremacy, recognized by the other tribes, and in the 3rd century CE when the Japanese first organized their kingdom, it was headed by a Yamato king. The king, who was also the high priest, was granted supreme authority in the administration of state affairs, but in fact it was a federation of tribes without central rule. The state was divided into districts called "Kony," and each district was divided into areas called "Agata," headed by "Agata-nushi."

In the 5th century CE, the first Chinese envoys came to Japan to spread the theory of Confucius, and together with it to instill Chinese culture. Confucius' theory, more than being a religion, preaches for a branched social organization based on a national discipline that defines the role and status of each individual in the country. There is a certain amount of social justice in this theory, based on the assumption that nature created all people equal and they differ from each other only in their talents and in the way of their development. Anyone capable of reaching a high degree of development is entitled to a higher position in society, provided they continue their studies and play their part in good faith. The place of every individual in the country is determined solely in accordance with his talents, knowledge, and ability to use them for the benefit of society. And in essence, Confucian theory preaches a social order that states that if the king fulfills his duty to the people, and the people fulfill their duty to the monarchy; and if every individual fulfills their obligation to society and society fulfills its duty to the individual, then everyone will have a life of happiness and peace. Many people in the royal court supported this theory. They saw in it an effective means of giving religious consent to permanent governance orders that centralize supreme authority in the hands of the kingdom.

In the 6th century, Japan was again in crises that stemmed mainly from wars on the Korean Peninsula. Many refugees, called "Kikjin," came to Japan and were welcomed by the people with open arms, but apparently they caused social and economic difficulties. The kingdom entered a new organizing period, which was centered on a distribution of land and finding jobs for refugees. Large estates that belonged to previous settlers and were

called “Tado-Koro” were not included in the new land distribution, but many of the refugees were absorbed there and found work in them. Besides the distribution of land, many improvements were made for collecting taxes and building state grain warehouses, called “Kore.”

At that time, a new religion began to arrive in Japan, which caused an important turn in the religious perception of many people; this religion was the “Mahayana” faction of Buddhist theory. The introduction of the new religion to Japan was slow and lasted for a long period. Many liked the attractive rituals of the new religion and tended to accept it, and there were others who opposed its infiltration and feared it would push away the “Shinto” religion. These differences of opinion finally resulted in a war between their supporters and opponents, and Prince Shotoku, who won this war, adopted the Buddhist religion and declared it the state religion alongside Shinto. To understand the factors that led the Japanese to accept Buddhism, perhaps it would be helpful to devote a few lines to its development.

The foundations of the original Buddhist religion, which were founded in the 6th century BCE by an Indian Prince named Guatama Siddhartha, have so much resemblance to the foundations of the Hebrew religion that it can sometimes be wondered if it was not directly influenced by an unknown Hebrew prophet, who was a war refugee and ended up wandering into the far Indian land.

Guatama Siddhartha, known as Buddha, was an Indian prince born in one of the small kingdoms, at the base of the Himalayas, in the 6th century BCE. Living a quiet life in his father’s palace, surrounded by all the magnificence and comfort a prince’s life can bestow, he was disturbed by several life phenomena, and sank into deep reflections about four phenomena that bring great suffering to all mankind. These phenomena, which do not skip any person, and do not differentiate between a prince and a beggar, or a saint and an impure one, are sorrow, disease, old age, and death. Looking at people’s lives and their sufferings, Buddha concluded that by prayers alone, it is impossible to change much and the suffering cannot be prevented. On the other hand, it seemed to him that there had to be a way to make life easier, and instead of the suffering that mankind was experiencing, to bring it happiness. He abandoned the comfortable life of the royal palace and went in search of the longed-for path. After six years of wandering, seclusion, penance, and reflection, he concluded that most causes of suffering lie within the person’s own spirit, and they are expressed in the lust for existence, lust

for body sensations, ignorance, and misguided opinions. As a means of overcoming these causes of suffering, he founded the "Eightfold Path," which formed the foundation of his new teachings. After he finished drafting his faith, he left for the holy city of Barnas, on the banks of the Ganges in India, and began preaching to his listeners that the only way to free oneself from suffering is embedded in the Eightfold Path, which includes proper observation, correct intention, proper speech, proper action, proper lifestyle, proper effort, correct state of mind, and proper concentration. These Eight Paths are guidelines for those who aspire to reach the highest level of happiness. The interpretation that Buddha gave to his path amounts to no murder, no adultery, no covetousness…, just as Moses gave Israel seven centuries before Buddha formulated them. Although the wording is a little different, it means the same, and it comes down to "*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*" Buddha did not rule out the existence of a higher power or divine power, but apparently he thought that there was no point in harassing such a power with prayers because they made no difference. He did not promise his followers a life in the afterlife, and denounced appeals to wizards and sorcerers. And this also fits to what Moses commanded the Israelites:

"There shall not be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens, or a sorcerer." (Deuteronomy 18: 10)

"You shall walk in all the way that the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live, and that it may go well with you, and that you may live long in the land that you shall possess." (Deuteronomy 5: 33)

When one of Buddha's disciples asked him how one could tell which religion is the right religion among of all faiths, he replied with something like this: "Do not believe in rumors, and do not believe in tradition only because it has been around for many years. Do not accept anything as a truth just because it was told to you by an important person or one of your priests. Believe only in those things that you will learn and explore by yourself, and with your own wisdom, you will conclude that they are suitable for your way of life and provide benefit to other people." These words from Buddha are remarkably similar to Moses' words, when he warns the people about false prophets who may rise and lead them into believing in false words:

"And if you say in your heart, 'How may we know the word that the LORD has not spoken?' When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if

the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him." (Deuteronomy 18: 21-22)

The simple meaning of Moses' words is that if someone tells you that he is a truth-telling prophet, check their words with your wisdom, and do not fear him just because he says that he is a prophet. And seven-hundred years later, Buddha replied to his disciples with exactly the same thing.

Like the teachings of any man of great conscience, Buddha's teachings have also undergone many stages of generality and interpretation by priests and the public. Buddha's teachings were oral teachings. He used to relate in his preaching to the natural wisdom of his listeners and ruled out imposing his beliefs forcibly. Many years after his death, his disciples continued to act according to their teacher's instructions, but later the opinions were divided regarding the intentions and interpretations of his theory, which resulted in two main streams in the Buddhist religion: the stream of "Hinayana," which is more conservative, saw in Buddha a personality of a high moral standard, which should set a noble example of a proper way of life. Such a lifestyle can lead to "Nirvana," which is the highest degree of happiness, and may be achieved by a high mental ascension that frees the person from the desires of senses that bring suffering to mankind. Followers of the second stream, the "Mahayana," saw Buddha as a divine embodiment that surrounds the whole universe and assures its followers that if they do not achieve Nirvana in the life of this world, they will certainly achieve it in the afterlife, in the Western Paradise, by Buddha's side. To attract believers and spread their religion among many, the Mahayana believers performed colorful ceremonies, accompanied by orchestras, dances, parades, and flags.

From the two main streams of the Buddha religion more streams developed in the following years, which gradually spread throughout the Far Eastern countries, reaching China around the 1st century CE. The first Buddhist monks in China worked for many years until they managed to gain in it a solid foothold. Initially, small monasteries were established, whose monks lived modestly and engaged in charitable acts, and gradually picked up other believers who began to spread Buddha's teachings in nearby countries as well.

When the first preachers of Buddha religion arrived in Japan, the kingdom was in crisis. The royal family welcomed the new religion with open arms because it saw in its rituals a way to lift the people's spirit, and the people

saw in it a way to alleviate their life sufferings in this world, and a chance to win an afterlife alongside with Buddha. And the Shinto religious followers, who initially expressed opposition to the infiltration of the new religion, accepted it nonetheless with tolerance because they did not see in it anything that was an extreme contradiction to their religion. Buddha's priests helped to introduce the religion not by disqualifying the Shinto religion, but rather by presenting it as a new religion that complements the absence of colorful rituals.

The infiltration of the Buddha religion to Japan opened a new era in the relations between China and Japan. Many students were sent to China to study firsthand the main tenets of Buddhist religion and rituals, and delegations went there to study administrative, architecture, art, medicine, and work practices. Japan started to become steeped in Chinese culture, which at the time stood at an extremely high level. They began learning with devotion everything that could be learned and continued by imitating the entire Chinese way of life. The imitation ambition reached such a level, that when the Japanese decided to build their first capital, Nara, they made it as an exact replica of Chang'an city, which at the time was China's capital city.

Along with China's culture, Japan adopted the Chinese ideographic writing, which they called "Kanji." In this highly cumbersome method, no letters are used; instead, there are drawings that express the meaning of words. By joining lines an image is created of the idea, which is being expressed, and the number of images is about the same number as words in a language. However, despite the complexity of writing, and the difficulty of studying Chinese ideography, the adoption of writing for the purposes of administration and religious practices gradually spread out to other areas of life. They allowed various events, taken from the life of the Japanese people, to be written, and gradually the first budding of Japanese literature started to develop.

In the 7th century, important organizational changes were made in Japan, which were probably a result of Chinese influence. During this period known as Taika, which means a "great change," the king was granted broader powers than he had until then, and he effectively became the supreme ruler of the kingdom. Three ministers were elected, as a kind of supreme council, assisting the king in managing the affairs of the state. According to the Chinese format, a new method was established for hiring government workers, by which it was determined that only those who pass the exams are

eligible to receive government jobs. A method of land distribution was established, which was renewed every six years. In this process, each citizen received a portion that depended on the family size and its needs. New tax collection arrangements were made, in which the farmers gave a small percentage of the agricultural produce straight to the treasury representatives and not to the governors of the provinces, as was customary before. The official name of the Kingdom of Japan was set to be "Nihon," the Kingdom of the Rising Sun.

At that time, the tradition of a regent rule was also introduced alongside the emperor's rule. This tradition was introduced in an interesting form by the influential Fujiwara clan, who made an original ruse to perpetuate its influence on ruling power in Japan. They managed in all sorts of intrigues to marry one of their family's daughters to the young emperor. When the heir to the throne was born, the emperor would give up the monarchy for the benefit of his young son, and then there was a Fujiwara "grandfather" helping the young grandson manage the state affairs. And when the grandson came to age, one of the Fujiwara clan's daughters reappeared, and a new cycle of grandfather rule began. This practice penetrated so deeply into the Japanese tradition that it only ceased to exist in the 20th century.

The 8th century, known as the Nara period, was named after the first capital city that the Japanese built in the form of the Chinese capital, Chang'an. Besides being a capital city, it also became an important center of religious life, and a concentration place for many Buddhist monasteries and temples. It became famous internationally mainly because of a giant Buddha statue called Daibutsu, which is about 15 meters high.

During this period, several wars broke out in Japan with tribes whose identity was unclear, and it is believed that they were the descendants of the Aino people, who began to forcefully oppose Japan's spread on the islands. In addition to the difficulties of the war that Japan was in, many groups of bandits, who would harass residents and estate owners, also raided it. Among the robbers were Buddhist monks, who would go out to "collect tax" for monasteries and robbed anything they could get ahold of. To protect their property, the estate owners organized private armies, under the command of professional officers, who devoted themselves assiduously to study war tactics, and later organized into professional associations that began to constitute a special status in the nation, and developed into the famous Japanese army, which was willing without hesitation to sacrifice its life for

the emperor and the homeland.

The 9th century is known as the Yan'an Period, which was named after the city of Heian-kyo, which was the second capital of Japan to be built in the form of the Chinese capital. During this period, there was a change in the relationship between Japan and China: the relations between the two countries were cut off. The Japanese people apparently felt that they were mature enough and no longer needed China's cultural guardianship, particularly when the Chinese always regarded the Japanese as inferior people. With the weakening of the Chinese influence there was a national awakening that gave a boost to the development of original values, resulting in the use of original Japanese writing, which was written in two forms, called "Katakana" and "Hiragana." In these two forms of writing, the Japanese tried to somewhat mimic the outer form of Chinese syllables; but in terms of usage they are completely different. Forty-eight letters were set, that were permanent syllables without any meaning. By combining syllables into words, it was possible for the first time to express ideas in writing without the need for pictorial syllables. The introduction of the new Japanese writing for daily use gave a boost to the development of the original Japanese literature, which was mainly written by women who wrote poems and descriptions from the life of the kingdom court and the life of the people. *(One of the most famous books of that time, "The Tale of Genji," by the author Murasaki Shikibu, was translated to Hebrew and published by Shoken.)*

Towards the beginning of the 9th century, Emperor Kammu moved his capitol to a new city, which was specifically built for this purpose, and was called "Heian-kyo." The name means "peace city," and it is Kyoto of today, a city that has served as Japan's capital for more than 1,000 years. It is not known exactly what motivated Emperor Kammu to move his capital from Nara, but it is thought that the cause was pressure from the Buddhist monks who sought a greater influence in the kingdom's court and wanted to take over the administration of the kingdom's affairs. At some point, things reached the stage that one of the monks' leaders wished to become the monarch himself.

At the end of the 9th century, contact with China was effectively severed and the kingdom of Japan remained isolated from the outside world for many years. Although the royal dynasty continued to be steeped in Chinese culture, its influence on the country's life diminished. The emperor's duties were only

formal, and the actual rule was in the hands of the Fujiwara regents.

In the 11th century, the Fujiwara clan's influence declined and a vigorous contest began between two powerful families over the regent's inheritance. The two clans, the Taira and the Minamoto, each claimed the leadership and based their claims on ancient royal ties. A war broke out between the supporters of both groups, which ended with the victory of the Minamoto clan, and its influence reached such dimensions that they established an independent military base in Kamakura, enforcing upon the people a martial law that was independent of the emperor's rule. The emperor allegedly continued to have the highest authority of power, but in fact the Minamoto clan was ruling the land.

In the 12th century there emerged in Japan inclination to renew commercial ties with China, and construction began on a big commercial fleet for importing luxury goods. Along with the development of the fleet and the cruises, groups of pirates were organized, who intermittently engaged in both trade and maritime robbery. The pirates probably provided an economic benefit to Japan by supplying the country with goods that were purchased "cheaply," but they eventually caused the Chinese to close their ports to Japanese boats and prohibiting them from docking in them.

At the end of the 13th century, Japan went through a severe crisis, which this time came from the outside. A powerful Mongolian army of about 25,000 people landed on the island of Tsushima, located between Korea and Japan, and managed to overcome the Japanese garrison, which included 200 soldiers. The small guarding force refused to surrender, fought the invaders, and was destroyed. After their victory in Tsushima the Mongols landed on another small island but met with a strong Japanese resistance and had to retreat. They did not give up, and a few years later they mobilized a large army, equipped with over 3,000 vessels, and sailed to invade and conquer Japan. The Japanese army was not alarmed by the enemy's great power and made all preparations to meet and fight the fleet of invaders. However, as the Mongols were on their way to their destination, a large storm broke out at sea, which shattered the invader's fleet into fragments, saving Japan from a severe military test that would have threatened its independence and integrity. The Japanese saw the storm as a miracle, calling it a "Kamikaze," meaning the Holy Wind.

For many years, Japan was a closed, isolated, and unknown land to the

West. The first news to reach Europe about the existence of this mysterious land were brought by the Venetian Marco Polo, who lived in the years 1254 to 1324, and made many journeys in the Asian continent. For 17 years, Marco Polo was employed as an advisor to the Mongolian Emperor, Kublai Khan, and was in service to him during the attempted invasion of Japan. On his return to Venice, Marco Polo talked about the "Cipango" Islands, located east of the mainland, and this was how the West learned for the first time about the existence of these islands. But the main contact between Europeans and Japanese was created only in the mid-16th century, when Portuguese ships brought the "Southern Barbarians," as the Japanese called the Portuguese, to the waters of Japan. The new visitors were received very cordially in Japan, which developed an era of trade relations with the peoples of Europe, which was followed by the infiltration of Christianity into Japan.

Towards the end of the 16th century, Japan was subjected to many civil wars, in which stood out the ambition of the large estate owners to occupy more powerful positions in managing state affairs. Such an estate owner was like a small emperor in his area and had a private army that waged wars for his master. At that time, a great warlord, named Hideyoshi, rose to power. He restored order, united the kingdom, and governed it with severe martial law. After he completed the kingdom's reunification, Hideyoshi tried to expand its borders, invading Korea with the intention of attacking China. However, these attempts did not produce the hoped-for results, and the Japanese army returned to its islands. At that time, there was a small incident between a Portuguese captain and a Japanese merchant that resulted in a brutal persecution of Christians in Japan. The Portuguese captain, whose merchandise was confiscated by the Japanese merchant, apparently wanted to save his goods, explaining to the merchant that the Kingdom of Portugal was a large kingdom that dominates many countries, and that no one could harm a Portuguese citizen. When the captain was asked how it was possible for one king to reign over so many countries, he innocently replied that the king first sent missionaries preaching to receive the Christian religion, and after many of the country's inhabitants convert and become Christians, the king sends an army with which, with the help of local Christians, he conquers the country. This story reached the ears of Hideyoshi, who was not hesitant to firmly exercise all his powers to ban the preaching of the Christian religion and practicing its rituals.

After Hideyoshi's death, the military leadership passed into the hands of a

warlord, Tokugawa Ieyasu, who completed his predecessor's work in consolidating the kingdom, moving his headquarters to the city of Edo, which later became Tokyo, Japan's current capital. During Ieyasu's reign, persecution of Christians increased and many were even executed. Ties with the West were stopped altogether, and apart from a handful of Dutch, who were trusted by the Japanese, no Europeans could stay in Japan. The country was completely closed to all contacts with the outside, and those who came to it, or left it without permission, could face the death penalty.

The quarantine that Ieyasu imposed on Japan lasted until the mid-19th century. Many requests were directed to Japan with proposals to open its shores and link with the West, but all the requests were turned down. In 1853, the United States decided to exert pressure on Japan, which was accompanied by a military threat. Four warships commanded by Captain Perry entered Tokyo Bay with an objective to negotiate. This negotiation produced nothing, and Perry returned as he came. A year later, he returned to Tokyo Bay again, and this time with a threat of opening fire. The Japanese agreed then to sign a friendship deal with the United States. After a while, similar contracts were signed with Russia, the Netherlands, and England, and the country was opened to the Western world.

The contacts with the Western countries made great changes in Japan's entire political conception and made significant changes in the internal structure of the kingdom. The feudal-military system that Japan was under for so many years crumbled, and the emperor was reinstated with the supreme powers of state affairs. A new era had begun in the life of Japan, known as the Meiji period, where the Japanese tried to quickly learn everything they missed in previous years. Just as 1,000 years earlier, Japan sought to study and imitate China's culture, it again began dispatching students to Western countries to learn everything that could be learned. Within a few years the Japanese managed to close the technological gap between themselves and the West and become so strong that in 1894 Japan fought with China and in 1904 with Russia. Japan came out victorious in both wars and was recognized as one of the great powers of the world.

Chapter 10

The Connection with the Japanese People

From the brief review of the history of the Japanese people, we learn that around the 1st century CE some unknown tribes came to the Japanese Island, and for 1,800 years they lived there in isolation and disconnected from the Western world. They were called "Nihon," the land of the Rising Sun, and the land was divided into provinces called "Kony" and into areas called "Agata." Their religion was Shinto, which means The Way of Gods; their Temples had no statues or idols; and the gods they called "Kami."

These mysterious tribes spoke a language unlike any other and adopted the Chinese writing they called "Kanji," because they had no writing of their own. At the end of the 8th century, they developed two kinds of original writing, called "Katakana" and "Hiragana."

From a hasty, superficial view, there seems to be no basis for thinking that the Japanese people ever had anything to do with the Hebrew people. But in a slightly more in-depth examination, it turns out that in the tangle of all the strange Japanese names some data are revealed, which at this stage may not mean much but it may justify more scrutiny of additional data. We will try to gradually test some of the data.

The first thing that catches the eye is the surprising resemblance between a name that the Japanese called "Province" and the ancient Hebrew name of "Rosh"("head"). Because their districts they called "Kony," and in ancient Hebrew (Bambara) "Kon" means "head." Which means, perhaps, that the Japanese used to simply call their main large districts "Heads." The main districts were divided into "Agata," each of which consisted of a group of families that in modern-day Hebrew we might have called an "Aguda" of families, which means "collection" or "association." At the head of any such an "Agata" was a man who was called "Agata-Nushi," which today we might

have called him “Nesi Aguda,” which means in today’s Hebrew “Association President.”

When the Japanese absorbed into their country war refugees who came from Korea, they provided them with land which was not included in the division of the so-called “Tado-Koro” estates. And in ancient Hebrew, this name means “old property,” or ancient property that was already assigned to the settlers who came in first. (TA – “property”; DO – accentuating word; KORO –“old” or “ancient”). And when they set up the state grain warehouses, they called them KORE, which is a slight distortion of the Hebrew word for grain warehouses, MEGURA.

If our interpretations of the meanings of the words mentioned is correct, it may be concluded that when the Japanese came to the islands, there were some additional Hebrew words in their language, which compared to today’s Hebrew pronunciation sound somewhat distorted, and they continued to use words from the ancient Hebrew language. Then the SHINTO religion will not be interpreted as the “Way of the Gods” but as the “Honest Law.” Because in ancient Hebrew SIN means “straight” and TO means “law,” just as the Hebrew word “Torah” means “the given law” (TO – “law,” and RA – an accentuating word for an action that was done). Hence the Japanese religion of “Honest Law” might have been based on the same ancient Hebrew Book that was lost from us and its name was the “Honest Book,” as was mentioned earlier. “*Yashar (honest) Book.” (Joshua 10: 13)*

This conclusion opens new avenues that allow us to see to what extent the ancient Japanese were connected to ancient Hebrew customs originating from the “Honest Book.” For that we will have to be supported by the books of the Torah (Bible), under the assumption that they portray, as we saw in the book of Joshua, what was written in the “Honest Book.”

The first thing that stands out from the “Honest Law” (SHINTO) is banning idolatry; the ancient Japanese were incredibly careful not to violate it. And remember that in those days, forbidding idol-worshipping was an extraordinary phenomenon, because all nations were using idols; therefore, perhaps the Japanese may have followed the writing in the book of Exodus, Chapter 20, verse 4:

“You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.”

And if the Japanese disgust of idols stemmed from the writing in the

"Honest Book," it may be assumed that they were careful in their exile to observe other commandments written in the same book, which instructed them how and when the Holidays of Israel should be celebrated. Chapter 23 of the book of Leviticus describes the main holidays that the ancient Hebrews were commanded to observe:

"These are the appointed feasts of the LORD, the holy convocations, which you shall proclaim at the time appointed for them. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight, is the LORD's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to the LORD; for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread." (verses 4-6)

"And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When you come into the land that I give you and reap its harvest, you shall bring the sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest to the priest.'" (verses 9, 10)

"And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the people of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe a day of solemn rest, a memorial proclaimed with blast of trumpets, a holy convocation.'" (verses 23-24)

"Now on the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be for you a time of holy convocation, and you shall afflict yourselves and present a food offering to the LORD. And you shall not do any work on that very day, for it is a Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God." (verses 27-28).

"And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the people of Israel, saying, On the fifteenth day of this seventh month and for seven days is the Feast of Booths to the LORD." (verses 33-34)

"That your generations may know that I made the people of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God." (verse 43)

When we try to compare the ancient Japanese holidays to the ancient Hebrew holidays, we encounter some difficulty that stems from the fact that during the thousands of years since the Tribes of Israel were exiled from Israel, the two peoples' holidays have undergone changes -- changes that do not enable us to determine the exact form in which the holidays were celebrated in ancient times. And similarly, we do not know whether the feasts, which are described in Chapter 23 of the book of Leviticus, were the only holidays of the Hebrews, or if they had other holidays that were

forgotten over time. Because from the writing in Deuteronomy Chapter 8, and from its style, perhaps it may be concluded that there were at least three more holidays that the Hebrews were ordered to remember and observe, and are related to Snake, Manna, and Water. Because that is what it says there:

"Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end. Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.'" (verses 11-17)

The Hebrews are accustomed to celebrating the "Water" feast until this day, in the celebration of "Beit Hashoeva" (House of Pumps) in Sukkot. However, the feast of the "Serpent" and the "Manna" holiday were probably less important holidays that were not kept everywhere, even though the symbol of the "Snake" and the "Manna" jar had been preserved for many years in the Temple, and it is not assumed that they were ignored by the Israelites. The Serpent was only removed from the Temple during the time of King Hezekiah; and the "Manna," which Moses ordered to keep some samples of in the Temple, was lost.

"He removed the high places and broke the pillars and cut down the Asherah. And he broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the people of Israel had made offerings to it and it was called Nehushtan." (II Kings 18: 4)

It is therefore clear, that the Israelites used to celebrate the Serpent's holiday, and King Hezekiah wanted to cancel this holiday for reasons unknown to us.

The ancient Hebrew holidays, which were primarily related to the agricultural cycle, and in memory of national events, were probably not uniform in their styles. During three holidays the Israelites used to make pilgrimage to Jerusalem to celebrate in the Temple: on Passover, on the feast

of the Shavuot, and on the Sukkot holiday. Many people used to observe the tradition of pilgrimage, but a large portion of them could not fulfil it every year, both because of the distance and because of their work. Consequently, to fulfill these commandments every year many used to celebrate their holidays in the rural cities. It is likely that the style of the holidays in the Temple was celebrated differently than it was in rural cities, and there were probably also differences between the holiday styles in Jehuda and Samaria. And when the Jews were exiled from their country, each community used to celebrate its holidays in accordance with the tradition that they preserved from the time when they had resided in the Land of Israel. Hence, in the diaspora too there were differences among the communities in the way the holidays were celebrated.

In the ancient Japanese holidays, there were changes mostly because of the influence of the Buddhist religion, whose priests took an easy path of least resistance, and combined Buddhist holidays with the existing Japanese holidays. It is therefore difficult to know whether certain Japanese holidays were the remnants of the ancient Hebrew holidays or whether they were introduced into the tradition of the people under the influence of Buddhist priests. However, despite this, the ancient Japanese holidays had customs and holidays that were so consistent with what is written in Chapter 23 of the book of Leviticus, that their Hebrew origins could not be questioned.

We will start with Passover. This Hebrew holiday was associated with two rituals in ancient times. On the 14th of the First month at dusk, the ritual of the sacrifice, which was probably celebrated in public, was held, and immediately following it on the 15th, the Matzah holiday began, which was celebrated within the family circle, and was mainly for eating special foods, commemorating the Exodus, and the eating of Matzah. Like all Hebrews in the diaspora, the Japanese did not make sacrifices. However, on the 15th of the First month, they celebrated a holiday related to eating special dishes, probably in commemoration of eating Matzahs in the desert.

On Shavuot, the ancient Hebrews used to bring the high priest the first fruits of their land. The ancient Japanese came to bring to the emperor, who was also the high priest, the first fruits of the rice harvest, just as written in the book of Exodus, Chapter 23:

"The best of the first fruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God." (verse 19)

On the 1st day of the Seventh month, the Hebrews used to celebrate the day of "Trumpet Blast Commemoration," which continues to be celebrated as New Year's Day. The Japanese used to celebrate on the 1st day of the Seventh month, or in its evening, the feast of the "Tahara" ("purifying") called "Oharae." During this holiday, the Japanese would fast and pray, and they would do the "Tahara" by cutting pieces of paper in human form, which they would then throw into the river or the sea. And this is like the Jewish custom, "Tashlich" ("throw away"), in which it is customary to be purified after a New Year's prayer and go to the river or the sea to "throw" into them all of one's offenses.

On the 10th of the Seventh month, the ancient Hebrews used to observe the Day of Atonement, which continues to be observed to this day. While the Day of Atonement was originally associated with the practice of "soul torture" by fasting, during King Solomon's reign the "torture" of fasting was moved to another date, and the feast of Yom Kippur became a feast of joy and dancing in honor of the inauguration of the Temple. This is what we learn from the book of II Chronicles, Chapter 7, which describes the inauguration of the Temple:

"At that time Solomon held the feast for seven days, and all Israel with him, a very great assembly, from Lebo-hamath to the Brook of Egypt. And on the eighth day they held a solemn assembly, for they had kept the dedication of the altar seven days and the feast seven days. On the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people away to their homes, joyful and glad of heart for the prosperity that the LORD had granted to David and to Solomon and to Israel his people." (verses 8-10)

And if during the Holiday that ended on the 23rd of the Seventh month all were happy and kind, it means that it was held on a date of Yom Kippur, and the holiday was full of joy.

On the 13th day of the Seventh month the ancient Japanese celebrated the feast of "Bon," which was dedicated to the souls of the dead and celebrated with youth dances. This holiday, which is one of the ancient Japanese holidays that is still being celebrated today, is credited to Chinese influence. "Bon" means "atonement" or request for forgiveness. And that is what the Hebrews were commanded to do on the day of Atonement in the Seventh month. As for remembering dead souls, until this day Jews often raise the memory of their dead on the day of the Atonement by lighting a "soul

candle."

On the 15th of the Seventh month, Jews up to the present time celebrate the feast of Sukkot, in memory of their dwelling in sukkot ("huts") in the desert. We do not know exactly how the ancient Hebrews used to celebrate the Sukkot holiday, but the ancient Japanese had a holiday called "Tanabata" that also took place in the Seventh month, and it is reminiscent of the Sukkot Holiday. In this holiday, the Japanese used to spread out leaves, sit on them, and watch the stars. This holiday is also attributed to Chinese influence, but in ancient Hebrew the word "tanubata" can be interpreted as "in praise of the great journey" (TANU, "to praise"; BA, "great"; and TA, "walking"). And the great journey that the Hebrews were ordered to commemorate, while mentioning the leaf huts in which they sat in the desert, is the Sukkot holiday.

Apart from these holidays, the ancient Japanese had also a feast of the Serpent, in which they used to make figures of snakes and dragons, probably in memory of the "*fiery serpents and scorpions"* that Moses commanded the Hebrews to remember *(Deuteronomy 8: 15).* As for the "Manna," which Moses also ordered not to forget, the Japanese still remember it in a unique way. In their language remains an interesting concept: "Man-azzo," which today means "pleasure." But this name probably originated from the "manna tree," remembering what the Hebrews ate in the desert, which was sweet "*like wafers made with honey.*"

In addition to the Biblical holidays, which are rooted in the Bible, the Japanese also practiced a "Shemita" ("land laid fallow for a year") custom but made a little change in it. Instead of leaving the fields fallow in the Seventh year, they used to redistribute the land each Six years. And so, they fulfilled the written commandment in the book of Deuteronomy, Chapter 15: "*At the end of every seven years you shall grant a release" (verse 1),* but they received new plots of land instead, and did not lose a year's crop.

After reviewing and comparing some ancient Japanese holidays, we will try to check the origin of another Japanese holiday, whose name is "Liberation Holiday," which was celebrated on the 15th of the Eighth month. The surprise of this holiday is the very name "Liberation Holiday," because ever since the Japanese came to their island, they have never been enslaved -- no one controlled them, and they had no one to get freed from. However, I Kings, Chapter 12, verse 32, explains to us exactly why this holiday exists, and leaves no doubt about its origin:

"And Jeroboam appointed a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month

like the feast that was in Judah, and he offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he made. And he placed in Bethel the priests of the high places that he had made."

This means that many years after the Kingdom of Israel separated from the Kingdom of Judea, the Ten Tribes continued to celebrate independence, and they celebrated it both when they were in exile and after having established a new kingdom for themselves in the Cipango Islands.

We said earlier that when the Japanese came to the islands, they used some Hebrew words that are somewhat different from the ones used today, and that they also included ancient Hebrew words (Bambara) in their language.

From Chapter 12 of the book of Judges we learn that the Ephraim tribe, the largest of Israel's tribes, had different pronunciation habits from those of the other tribes. When the people of Gilead fought the tribe of Ephraim, and wanted to see if any of the refugees was Ephraimite, they gave him a small test: "*The men of Gilead said to him, 'Are you an Ephraimite?' When he said, 'No,' they said to him, 'Then say Shibboleth,' and he said, 'Sibboleth,' for he could not pronounce it right." (verses 5, 6)* Hence, if the Japanese are indeed the descendants of the Ten Tribes, we should not be surprised if we will find many pronunciation deviations as a result of exchanging the consonants *Shin* and "*sin*". We also know that today the Japanese do not easily pronounce the consonant "L," which does not exist in their language. So, if a Japanese would like to say the Hebrew word "Ali" ("high"), he would pronounce it "Aie," which in Japanese means "high status" or "Ali." Apparently, there was also a time in the Japanese life when they were not used to pronouncing the letter "R," or would swallow it while speaking. Hence it is easy to see that the Japanese word "Shai," which means "song," and "Kiba," which means "horseback riding," are slight disruptions of the original Hebrew words "Shir" ("song") and "Re-khiva" ("horseback riding").

We recall that when the many Buddhist monks who were in monasteries around the first capital, Nara, began to harass the royal court with excessive demands to increase their influence on their governing the country, the royal court decided to stay away from their influence. To emphasize their affinity for their roots, they apparently built themselves a new capitol elsewhere and called it – Jerusalem!

The origin of the name "Jerusalem" remains shrouded in mist, and there are many assumptions. It may very well be an ancient Hebrew name that

means “place of this nation” and consists of the words YORO, which means “place”; SI, “nation”; LA, an accent word for specifying an association; and IN, “this”; and YORO-SILA-IN became Jerusalem (Yerushalaim in Hebrew). When David captured the city of Yebus and decided to establish there his national and spiritual state capital of “this nation,” he called it Jerusalem. The word “YORO” apparently continued to be used to describe a city “YIR” (in Hebrew), and the name Jerusalem (Yerushalaim) was interpreted as - “City of Peace” (YORO, “City”; and Shalom, “Peace”).

When the Japanese built their second capital in 794, they called it (HEIAN-KYO), which means in Japanese “city of peace.” But this word is pure Hebrew! If we recall that the Japanese used to suppress the letter “R,” therefore the correct Hebrew name of the Japanese Capitol would be HERA KIRYO, which is a combination of a Hebrew word that is used to this day, “Kirya” (“city”), and an ancient Hebrew word HERA, which means “peace.” And in this way the ancient Japanese commemorated their ancient capital, Jerusalem - a city of peace, in their new state of Cipango.

Recall that the name “Cipango,” which was disrupted years later to become “Jaapaan,” was brought into the West by Marco Polo who worked in the service of the Mongolian Emperor, Kublai Khan. It is thought that this name originated in the Chinese language and means “land of the rising sun.” But Cipango has nothing to do with the sun since it is a pure ancient Hebrew name that means “tribal island,” or “the island of the nation.” Because SI means “Nation” or “Tribe”; “PAN” is an emphasis word; and “GUN means “Island”; therefore SI-PAN-GUN - “island of the nation.”

We still need to find out the origin of the conventional nickname of Japan: “Land of the Rising Sun.” The Japanese themselves call their country “Nihon,” and this name has nothing to do with the Rising Sun. The name Nihon means “trustees of the book,” because in ancient Hebrew NI means “ally” or “trustee.” The origin of the name “Hon” is unknown, but in the Japanese language “Hon” means “book.” The name “Hon” may have been adopted from another language that Japanese was connected to, and it may be that it is an ancient Hebrew name that remained in the Japanese language and was lost from the Hebrew language and the Bambara language. But “NI-HON” means “Loyals of the Book,” as the Japanese called themselves when they settled on the islands and as they were also known when they belonged to the Hebrew people, who are also called “the People of the Book.” And the only Book that the Hebrew people had to be “Loyal” to was the “*Book of the*

Covenant" of Moses *(Exodus 24: 7)* or "*...words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments*" *(Exodus 34: 28)* that Moses received at Mount Sinai; and as recalled, "Sinai" in ancient Hebrew means "Rising Sun." Hence the full Hebrew nickname of the Japanese people will be "Loyalists of the book they received in the Sinai Desert," or as they are called up to the present time, "Nihon, Land of the Rising Sun."

And here we leave the ancient Japanese for a moment and take a glimpse at the tumultuous modern capitol of Japan, into the large commercial center located on Ginza street in Tokyo. Near the place where the street is located today, in the 17th century stood a coin die-casting facility, in which the coins were "stored" (meaning "Gniza" in Hebrew) before they were cycled. And in the name of this "Gniza" (storing place), the street is still called the "Ginza" today.

Chapter 11

Traces of the Ten Lost Tribes

Of all we know so far about the history of the Japanese, their ancient holidays, and their special language, I have no doubt that between the ancient Japanese and the ancient Hebrews there was once a connection. And this connection could only exist when the Japanese people were an integral part of the Hebrew people, and they separated from them during their walk into exile 2,700 years ago. Unfortunately, there were no writings left that described the Ten Tribes from the day they were exiled from their country until their settlement on their islands. Like the Hebrews, who were prohibited to make statues, they also did not leave on their way any writings on tombstones from which it would have been possible, perhaps, to try to reconstruct what might have happened. The "Loyals of the Book" probably had their own writing and presumably they used it to write on a card, or on a papyrus paper, and in the humid climates of Japan these writings could not have been preserved. In the absence of any other means that might help us in restoring the happenings of the Ten Tribes, we will need to turn to the only source that we have left, the Japanese language itself. According to the foreign words that survived in the Japanese language, we may determine the route that they passed through. And according to the semantic changes that occurred in the Hebrew words which survived in the Japanese language, we may perhaps determine their way of life and its development.

The fact that many Hebrew words survived in the Japanese language proves that throughout their exile they maintained national unity and did not disperse to assimilate into other peoples. Because only a group of people that guards its national unity can succeed in keeping its language. Indeed, any language goes through a continuous process of development in which words drop out of use and other words are added to express new concepts or new ideas. Under the influence of speakers of other languages who connect with speakers of any language, there are many words that are borrowed from one language by another and over time become an integral part of the language

that adopted them. However, this usually happens in words commonly used in trade or social relations. But words related to the national image of people, or to special life experiences of a group of people, are hard to move out of the language, and they adhere to it for many years. Take, for example, the Japanese word URESHISA, which means "joy," and it is none other than the pure Hebrew dialect URU-VESISU, which in Hebrew means "rise up and have joy." The continued existence of this word in the Japanese language suggests that in an unknown period the Japanese people went through an important national experience, which was related to SASON ("joy" in Hebrew). It is hard for us at this point to know when this experience happened. But if we remember that the Ten Tribes were exiled to "Media" cities, which later became cities of Persia, *"...Persia and Media" (Ester 1: 3)*, it is therefore highly likely that the SASON experience was connected to the story of Esther's Scroll, which took place in Persia; and to commemorate the failure of the evil persons who sought to exterminate the Jews, the Jews celebrate with SASON the Feast of Purim to the present day.

Being in Persia, I had several opportunities to notice closely the fanaticism with which tribes or groups of people keep their unique language or words related to national identity. In one of my trips, which was related to building a dam on the Gorganrud River in the southwest region of the Caspian Sea, I was invited to a tent camp of a Turkeman tribe, and I was hosted in a beautiful fabric tent of the guide, who was supposed to lead me to the planned construction site. The Turkemans are Mongolian tribes who raise sheep and cattle, and take pride is in raising horses. Among themselves they speak a dialect of Turkish that has absorbed many Persian and Arabic words, but they also speak the Persian language well. When it was time to set off, my host called out his son, and because of my presence he spoke to him in Persian and asked him to prepare two horses for us. But the horses he called "Beiger," in Turkish, not "Asab," in Persian, because the horses are a source of national pride for the Turkemans and they are unwilling to change the name to a Persian or Arabic word.

On another occasion I visited the area of Lake Rezaiyeh, which is the ancient Lake Urmia located is in the north west of Persia. Along the western shore of this lake there are small villages with ancient Assyrians traces, living in clay huts and leading a lifestyle that is not different from any of their Persian neighbors' lifestyles. Despite being surrounded by Muslim tribes, they continue to uphold their Christian religion, retaining their ancient

Assyrian language, which they write in Hebrew letters (and some think that Hebrew is written in Assyrian letters), and never cease to miss the glory days of their early capital, Nineveh.

But the most interesting case that proves how a small, isolated group of people meticulously maintains its special language, occurred to me in the great Persian desert. I had to be in the desert to inspect the possibility of producing ore from a huge Salt Lake located about 70 kilometers north of Kashan city. I left Kashan early in the morning with the guide to get to the lake. The road was difficult and not well-marked, and the journey was very slow. After driving about 50 kilometers, our car got stuck in deep sand and it was impossible to move. After working for two hours trying to dig under the wheels and padding the sand with stones to get out of there, we discovered to our regret that the more we dug, the more we sank. Without any other option, we decided to leave the car and return to Kashan by foot and bring in help. It was 10 o'clock in the morning, and all around only the horizons were visible. After walking for seven hours in the sweltering heat of the desert, with a very small amount of water with us, we saw a human figure. We were totally exhausted, and besides injured legs full of blisters from the friction of sand that penetrated our shoes, we could no longer speak either. With the rest of our strength we reached the figure we saw from afar, and much to our delight it was one of the desert dwellers who was busy watering some vegetables with the water that he sucked out from a small qanat. (A qanat is an underground canal used to collect groundwater.) After we pounced on the qanat and drank as much as we could, we rested a little and explained to our new friend what had happened. It was late, and he invited us to go with him to his village and rest there until the next day, and then he and his friends would help us get the car out. We accepted the offer willingly and we gathered all our strength to walk the long three kilometers to the village. But the effort was worthwhile. We reached a small village of 15 or 20 families, all built into the large courtyard of an ancient inn, which was once a station for convoys, surrounded by wilderness. Our host, who built his house outside the village walls, set for us a small tent, and late at night we joined him for the dinner. We were still tired and exhausted, but we could chat a little with our hosts. During the conversation I noticed an interesting phenomenon. With us, the hosts spoke Persian, but among themselves they occasionally exchanged sentences in another language that had a familiar tone, but I could not recognize it. With all my fatigue, I wanted to ask them about their special

language, but I thought it would be disrespectful and postponed it to the next day.

Immediately after dinner, our host sent a messenger to a village near Kashan to find a car with a driver who would agree to go into the desert to rescue our car. The messenger rode his donkey all night and came back in the morning to tell us that the car would arrive later. And indeed, the car did arrive, and after a while we were on our way to the Salt Lake. While collecting the samples, my ear heard once again the special language that my hosts, and now my assistants at work spoke among themselves. This time the reverberation sounded to me like the Hebrew language, but I could not understand a single word of it. When I tried to interrogate my new friends about the nature of the language, they simply replied, "This is our language." And when I asked if there was anyone else besides them speaking this language, they replied that there was only one other small village in the desert whose inhabitants speak the same language. However, in no way was I able to ascertain the nature of the language, and I could not understand the secrecy that was surrounding it. This may be related to ancient persecution of speakers of this language and they still refrained from revealing its identity with motives related to the distant past of their history. But the small handful of desert people continued to jealously guard their language, and they have been reluctant to give it up despite being surrounded for many years only by Persian speakers, through whom they maintain their only contact with the outside world.

In the Japanese language there is another interesting Hebrew dialect which survived, indicating that at one time in their history they lived in prolonged period of stress. The word is KIAWASERU, which means today "if it may happen," and this is the Hebrew dialect KI-YEVASRU, meaning "if it may inform." It is of course difficult for us to know today what brought the Ten Tribes to live in prolonged anxiety and expect to be "informed," but if we briefly review the history of the East, we may perhaps try to understand it. The first thing we will do is try to locate the place to which the Ten Tribes were exiled, and we will pay special attention to that place.

The book of II Kings, Chapter 17, verse 6, tells us briefly "*...and he carried the Israelites away to Assyria and placed them in Halah, and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.*" From this short verse, we can conclude that most of the Ten Tribes were exiled to Assyria, which today is Iraq, and some were exiled to Medes cities, which today are in

Persia. This conclusion seems reasonable if we accept the common interpretation that "*Habor, the river of Gozan* " is "The Habor River of Gozan Land" and assume that in Assyria there was a region in the land by the name of Gozan. But this is inconceivable, if we turn to Chapter 37 of the book of Isaiah, verses 10-12, which describe the negotiations that the envoys of the King of Assyria conducted with Hezekiah.

"Thus shall you speak to Hezekiah king of Judah: 'Do not let your God in whom you trust deceive you by promising that Jerusalem will not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, devoting them to destruction. And shall you be delivered? Have the gods of the nations delivered them, the nations that my fathers destroyed, Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden who were in Telassar?'"

From here we learn that before these negotiations took place, the people of Assyria destroyed Gozan, and therefore it could not be a part of Assyria itself, and the Gozan River is probably in the Medes country too, which indeed was destroyed by Assyria several times.

Considering that the Ten Tribes have become Mongolians in their external appearance, it is likely that the Gozan River is the same river, which is called today Gorganrud, which gushes to the southeastern tip of the Caspian Sea. This area was already inhabited in ancient times by Mongolian tribes, and until about 40 years ago there was a small port in the area called Bandar-e Gaz, which in Persian means "Gaz port," which probably belonged to the "Gooz" tribes. Until the 6th century CE, the Mongol tribe's expansion reached the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea. The Ten Tribes who lived near the Mongol tribes must have accepted many foreigners, and without giving up their special culture, they absorbed the Mongols into their own community, which gradually changed their external appearance. A similar case—but in reverse—happened to the Turkish people, whose origin was Mongolian to start with. When they came to settle where they are now, they assimilated many members of the white race and lost their Mongolian appearance.

To support the claim that the Assyrians did exile the Ten Tribes to the Caspian Sea region, we will recall that at that time the Assyrians used to replace the residents who lived in conquered areas with residents that they brought in from other conquered areas. With this policy, the Assyrians tried to crumble the unity of the conquered peoples and prevent rebellions. In the Kingdom of Medes, which was not yet a cohesive kingdom in those days,

rebellions often broke out, and the Assyrians brutally suppressed them. About 20 years before the Assyrians occupied Samaria, they invaded Medes and annexed it to their kingdom. Five years later a rebellion apparently broke out in Medes, and Assyrians mercilessly destroyed the country. To prevent a recurrence of such cases it exiled the Ten Tribes to Medes.

The area now known as Gorgan in Persia was formerly known as Hyrcania. In the history of the Eastern peoples and their wars, Hyrcania never played a crucial role, and seemingly had nothing to do with the distant Land of Israel. But sometimes a phenomenon stands out that sets the foundation for the assumption that between Hyrcania and Israel existed a relationship that lasted for many years. One evidence of such contact, at least until the destruction of the First Temple, we find in the first verse of the book of Jeremiah, Chapter 39:

"In the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and all his army came against Jerusalem and besieged it."

In memory of this siege, on the 10th day of the Tenth month the Jews observe the mourning of "Ten of Tevet" (Tevet is a Hebrew month). The ancient Japanese used to have in the Tenth month a mourning of 30 days, and they could not have had any other reason to hold the mourning in the Tenth month, other than in memory of the siege of Jerusalem. Hence, it turns out that close to 140 years after the Ten Tribes went into exile they were still connected to their homeland. They no longer saw themselves as part of the Kingdom of Israel but as an integral part of the Jewish people.

About 100 years after the death of Alexander the Great, a new kingdom began to form in northeast Persia, which gradually became an important power in the East, the Kingdom of Parthia. The formation of this kingdom began during the reign of Arsaces II (214–247 BCE), who conquered Hyrcania and attached it to his small kingdom. A few years later, however, the Parthians were forced to retreat in face of the armies of Antiochus III, who infiltrated East up to Hyrcania. But when Antiochus was busy with intrigues in the West, the Parthians returned and reincorporated Hyrcania into their kingdom.

In 175 BCE, Antiochus IV, commonly known as Epiphanes, came to power. And while this king was preoccupied with the persecution of the Jews that led to the Maccabees' rebellion in Judea, Parthia grew stronger and took the opportunity to expand the borders of its kingdom. At that time, however,

a rebellion broke out in Hyrcania, and the Parthian King Mithridates went out to suppress it.

Rome gradually took Greece's place in the East, and between the Parthians and the Romans there were many conflicts that stemmed mainly from the interest of these two kingdoms to occupy Armenia. In one of these wars, Artabanus III was defeated by the Roman armies, and was removed from power by his people. He took refuge for a while in Hyrcania, and shortly later he returned to power; in 37 CE he signed an agreement with Rome establishing the regions of rule and influence of each kingdom. For unknown reasons, during the reign of Artabanus many Jews who lived within the borders of his kingdom were murdered.

After the death of Artabanus III, Parthia underwent 10 years of internal wars, and in 51 CE Vologases I came to power. For a while Vologases was occupied with the Kingdom of Adiabene (Hadib), whose king and some of its inhabitants were Jewish foreigners. In 55 CE, there was another confrontation between Parthia and Rome, but at that time a rebellion broke out in Hyrcania, forcing Vologases to push aside his conflict with Rome so as to concentrate on suppressing the rebellion in Hyrcania. Shortly thereafter Vologases seized an opportunity to attack Roman legions that camped near Hyrcania. The Roman legions withdrew, and in 63 CE a peace treaty was signed between Rome and Parthia.

Between 66 CE to 110 there is no clear knowledge of the events that took place in Parthia, but it is known that in the year 71 Vologases sent Titus a golden crown in appreciation of his big victory over Judea.

From this brief review we can make an interesting observation related to Hyrcania. When Antiochus IV pursued the Jews and triggered the Maccabees' rebellion, a rebellion broke out in Hyrcania. We do not know the reasons for the rebellion, but if a large Jewish body was living there, it is quite possible that the rebellion broke out for the purpose of mobilizing an army to help the rebels in Judea.

In 40 CE, when the Roman Caesar Caligula ordered his statue to be placed in the Temple, there was a great deal of unrest among all the Jews in exile, which bordered upon an open rebellion against Rome. At that time, the King of Parthia, Artabanus, massacred Jews in his kingdom. Perhaps this massacre was also carried out in response to the wishes of Jews in Persia and Hyrcania to mobilize an army against Rome. And when the rebellion against Rome broke out, in 66 CE, Parthia underwent a period of great chaos. And

here too it is possible that at that time a major uprising broke out in Hyrcania, which involved sending an army to the aid of the rebels in Judea.

We have a small piece of evidence that may support the hypothesis that the connection between the Ten Tribes and Judea existed until the destruction of the Second Temple by Titus. History wished that both Temples were destroyed at the same date, the 9th of month "Av," which is the Fifth month. To differentiate between the days of mourning of the destruction of the two Temples, it is common to have one day of mourning on the 10th of month "Tevet," to commemorate the siege and destruction of the First Temple, and a day of mourning on the 9th of Av, in memory of the destruction of the Second Temple, which was destroyed between the 8th of AV and the 10th.

The ancient Japanese used to have three days of charity for the poor, and these days fell between the 10th and the 13th of the Fifth month, a date that matched the destruction of the Second Temple.

When the Great Revolt against the Romans broke out in 66 CE, the Ten Tribes, who were living in Hyrcania, wanted perhaps to draft a large army and come to Judea's aid. At that time there was an alliance between Rome and Parthia, and it is unlikely that the Parthians would have allowed a large Jewish army to attack Roman legions. But it seems that the people of the Ten Tribes had not given up and decided to come to their brothers' aid at all costs. But Hyrcania is in a secluded area closed and surrounded by high mountains with very few passageways. The Ten Tribes decided not to withdraw and make a great turn, going around the Alborz Mountains, and get to Judea through the south of Persia. They entered the Karakum and Gobi deserts, and from there they had no way out. From the journey of the Ten Tribes in the Gobi and Karacom deserts there are interesting words that remained in the Japanese language. One word is GOBI, which means the "end of the world," and it survived in the Japanese language to commemorate the endless desert "Gobi"; and the second word is SABAKU, which means "desert." But this word consists of two ancient Hebrew words and one Persian word, which means like SABAKU, "mountains of big death" (SA – "death"; BA – "big"; and "KU" – in Persian means "mountain"). And indeed, the Gobi Desert, which is surrounded by high mountains, fits the description of SA-BA-KU. On their way to encircle the Gobi Desert they probably suffered major losses because of the cold weather, and many of them died along the way. This we can conclude from another Hebrew word that survived in the Japanese

language, KARERU, which means to “die.” And the semantic change that converted the word KERUR (meaning “cold” in Hebrew) to “death” probably stems from the fact that many people died of cold along their journey.

By constantly heading East and finally crossing the surrounding mountains of the Gobi Desert, they reached Korea, and from there, there was no longer an open land road that led to Judea. They probably settled in Korea for a while, and from there they reached the Japanese Islands and live there to this day. From the time of their settlement in Korea and in the Japanese Islands, in the 1st century CE, the history of the Japanese people begins.

When the Ten Tribes were in the Medes exile, they absorbed into their language several Persian words that suggest the state of their feeling. The most prominent word from these is the Persian word RAHA, which means “to be freed.” But in the Japanese language, this word changed to be RIHAN, which means “to rebel.” This semantic change seems reasonable if we recall that in their many rebellions in Hyrcania, the Ten Tribes needed to explain to the Persians, in their own language, that the revolt was declared in order to become free and return to their homeland.

When the Japanese came to their islands, they organized into tribes and family groups in accordance with their ancient tribal tradition. This we can deduct from the Japanese word IDOKORO, which today means “address,” but literally it means “belonging to an ancient group” (I – “you”, “yours”; DO –“group”; and KORO – “ancient”). It implies that every “new immigrant” who came to the Cipango Islands was asked: IDOKORO? and accordingly they were sent to their place of settlement.

The Journey from Samaria, Israel, to Sumera, Japan

When checking the short dictionary at the end of the book and noting the semantic changes that occurred in several surviving Hebrew words in the Japanese language, it is implied that the Ten Tribes were prepared and ready for war. The word TSUTSUSHIMU, which means today in Japanese “be careful,” probably survived in the language because of the vanguard units that the Japanese would send before the journey of the main group to peek (“HETSITSU” in Hebrew) and hear (“SHIM`U” in Hebrew) carefully if the advancing road was clear and safe. Also, the “Kami,” which were found in the tombs of ancient Japanese, testify that those were “Kamea” (“amulet” in Hebrew) of fighting tribes and not idols as generally thought. If we consider the Hebrew pronunciation of the Samaritans, and we accept the assumption that their pronunciation is closer to the ancient pronunciation rather than to modern Hebrew pronunciation, then the word “Kamea`” will be pronounced as “Kami,” because customarily the consonant Ayin (in Hebrew) is generally not pronounced. And the “Kami” of the ancient Japanese were, as recalled, a stone shaped like a Comma, a Dagger, and a Mirror, and the three of them were logical amulets for Hebrew war tribes. The stone in the form of a

Comma is the first letter of the word “Jehovah,” the God of armies that accompanied the Hebrew people in all their wars. The Dagger is the symbol of war or self-sacrifice, and the Mirror was an important tool of war for tribes that were in engaged in combat, because it makes it possible to send warning signals and agreed-upon signs with the aid of the sun. In this connection, it is interesting to note that in the Russian–Japanese war in 1905, the “Heliograph,” a Japanese military communication device, appeared for the first time and was used to send signals with the aid of the sun’s rays. There is no doubt that the Mirror was a useful fighting device for tribes to be used as a “Kami.”

Finally, in the book of II Samuel, Chapter 5, verse 10, it is said:

“And David became greater and greater, for the LORD (Jehovah) the God of hosts (Armies), was with him.”

The word “Jehovah” as a name for the God of Armies or the God of War was preserved in the Japanese language in a remarkably interesting way. The God of War is called the “Hachiman,” and as we recall, the Samaritans often pronounces the word “Jehovah” as “Shima.” And the “Shima” God of Armies became the “Hachiman” God of War.

Chapter 12

Sayonara

Before we part by saying "Sayonara," it is perhaps advisable to add a few words about the languages we examined and to note, with a quick glance, some phenomena that seem interesting.

Hebrew is a Fusional language; the Bambra language is an Isolating language; and the Japanese language is considered an Agglutinative language. Each of these three languages underwent separate developmental processes. Those who spoke them created new words and special dialects that fitted special social and political events that made their mark on their way of life. When the Hebrews came to Eretz ("country") Israel, they spoke the ancient Hebrew language whose remains are reflected today in the Bambara language. When the Ten Tribes were exiled from Israel, about five centuries after they arrived there, there were still many Hebrew words that remained from the Bambara language. New words were then created from natural development and from foreign words that were adopted from other languages. Many such words have survived in the Japanese language, and they are used to the present day. However, in the long exile of the Ten Tribes, which lasted seven centuries until they reached the Cipango Islands, they absorbed into their language many words from the languages of peoples with whom they came into contact. In this process they created for themselves a special language, for which it is difficult, to this day, to find similarities to their original language or to any other language. We may understand the reason for it if we recall that at the time they were exiled, the language dominating all the Eastern Region, from the Mediterranean to Assyria, was the Aramaic language. Aramaic was sort of an international communication language, and therefore some Aramaic words naturally survived in the Japanese and the Hebrew languages. Living in Medes exile, they picked up from the Turkmens quite a few Turkish words, and from the Persians, Persian words. By combining words from different languages, they created new words for themselves that are difficult to trace to their origins. For example,

the Japanese word BITA, which means “without property” or “lack of all,” consists of the Persian word BI, which means “without” or “none,” and the Bambara word TA, which means “property.” And another Japanese word, a little longer, CHAKUDANKYORI, meaning “firing range,” consists of three languages. CHAKU is the Aramaic word “sheka,” which means “fall”; DAN in Bambara means “border”; and KYORI is a Hebrew word meaning “that shoots.” And the literal interpretation of CHAKU-DAN-KYORI will be the “limit of the fall of the shot” or the “range of the shot.” As well as the beautiful Hebrew word SAYONARA, which the Japanese use to say “goodbye” or farewell, and which means best wishes for “safe arrival.” It consists of the Hebrew word SAYOM, which means “peace” (remember that the Japanese do not pronounce the letter “L”); and NARA, which in the Bambara language means to “arrive” or “come”; and SAYOM-NARA became SAYONARA.

There is no doubt that some of the explanations and assessments presented in this short book may provoke disagreements, and this is natural and desirable if it brings further clarifications, or other more plausible explanations. However, to minimize the factors that may lead to disagreements, several short dictionaries of comparison are provided at the end of the book, proving that the great similarities between the words presented in them cannot be coincidental but stem from a close relationship that once existed between the speakers of the Hebrew language, the Bambra language, and the Japanese language. The Aramaic, Mongolian (Turkmen), and Persian influence on the Japanese language proves that at some point in the History of the Japanese—when they were the Ten Tribes—they were in close contact with speakers of these languages.

The **“Hebrew – Bambara”** dictionary will point out several identical words in the two languages that were formed by combining Bambara words with Hebrew words that appear in the Bible, which their meaning is sometimes not clear enough, and they are being used in the Bambara language.

“Hebrew – Japanese” will bring several examples of Japanese words whose Hebrew origin is clear, even though they have undergone semantic changes. Here are also Aramaic words that are not being used in Hebrew, and we will denote them with (A).

“Japanese – Bambara” will indicate several words that were lost in the Hebrew language but remained in use in Bambara and Japanese.

“Persian – Japanese” will show several Persian words that were picked up by the Ten Tribes in Persia and survived in the Japanese language.

“Turkish – Japanese” will show the Turkmen–Mongolian origin of several Japanese words.

“Complex Japanese Words” will demonstrate some combinations of words from different languages that were created as Japanese words.

It should of course be remembered that the words presented for comparison are not all the common words of the languages for which the comparison was made. Introduced are only words that due to considerable similarity between them, it is easy to compare or identify their origin. For example, we can show that the source of the Hebrew word BOKER (meaning “morning”) is from the Bambara words BO-KLE, which have the meaning of “out-sun”. And since the letters “R” and “L” are very frequently being exchanged, it is reasonable to assume that the word KLE (“sun”) was in the past KRE, and then BO-KRE converted to BOKER (“morning”). However, these types of examples are not shown in the dictionary.

At the beginning of the previous chapter, we said that it is difficult to assume that Tribes whose origin is from the “Book Nation” will not have a writing of their own. And in another place we saw that in the 8th century, when the connection with the Chinese weakened, the Japanese developed for themselves two types of writing: HIRAGANA, for common writing; and KATAKANA, for stylistic writing. And there is a reason to suspect that the new writing was not developed but existed and was for some reason “confidential.” The pronoun KATAKANA, which was given to the stylistic writing, means “protected writing” or “confidential writing,” and consists of the word KATA, which is a slight abbreviation or distortion of the Hebrew word KTAV (“writing”); and KANA, which in the Bambara language means “to guard,” to “protect,” to “watch.” This means that when the relations with China cooled off, the Japanese wanted to prove that they had their own writing, and that it was even better than the Chinese writing; and then they took out from hiding their “protected” writing and made it visible. And here we come up with the interesting insight that both the Hiragana and Katakana writing are based on Hebrew script. And before we bring in a few examples, we will precede with a few words about writing.

The Hebrews always used more than one form of writing, where one writing form was acceptable for holy words and another was used for secular purposes. A good example can be shown with Bar Kokhba coins, in which

the embedded words were written in ancient Hebrew script, although the square type of script was already used at the time.

When the Ten Tribes were exiled from Israel, they had several forms of Hebrew script, and we do not know today what form of writing was used and for what needs. However, it may be assumed that in all forms of writing they used to write the holy words or prayers, and those who were familiar with writing were probably a small minority who belonged to the priestly class. When they decided to convert the writing from sacred writing into secular writing, they introduced some changes in it for two reasons. First, they probably wanted the secular writing to be different from the writing intended for writing holy words; and second, they wanted to characterize their writings with a form similar to Chinese syllables, which enjoyed great prestige for a long time.

In Hebrew, we tend to mark vowels with marks mostly below the words. The Samaritans used vowel marks above the letters, and their shape is different. At the time that the Ten Tribes left the country and the Samaritans reached it, there was probably a method of vowel, and emphasis above the letters, and it was somewhat preserved by the Japanese. The following is a comparison between Japanese syllables and Hebrew letters.

Hebrew – Japanese

Hebrew Letter (Name)	Japanese Pronunciation	Hebrew Letter	Japanese Letter
One of the earlier forms of the Hebrew letter (Yod)	I	י	イ
The letter (Vav) with upper marking	U	ו	ウ
The letter (Vav), whose ancient pronunciation as (W)	WA	ו	ワ
The letter (Het), which in its earlier shape was	E	ח	エ
The letter (Kof)	KA	ק	カ
The letter (Kaf) at end of word	KU	ך	ク
The letter (Kaf) with upper marking	KE	ך	ケ
The letter (Kaf)	KO	כ	コ
The letter (Tsadi) inverted	SU	צ	ス
The letter (Noon) with crossing mark	NA	נ	ナ
The letter (Noon)	NO	נ	ノ
The letter (He)	HA	ה	ハ
The letter (Ain)	HI	ע	ヒ
One of the ancient forms of the letter (Pe)	FU	פ	フ
The letter (Pe) with marking	PU	פ	プ

Hebrew Letter (Name)	**Japanese Pronunciation**	**Hebrew Letter**	**Japanese Letter**
One of the ancient forms of the letter (Mem) when the vertical lines are not connected	MI	מ	ミ
One of the ancient forms of the letter (Tsadi) when the vertical lines are not connected	TSU	צ	ツ
The letter (Reish) with punctuation	RA	ר	ラ
The letters (Reish) and (Yod)	RI	ר י	リ

Dictionary

Bambara – Hebrew

BAMBARA	HEBREW
ANU Us.	**ANU** Us.
BO-A-KA Combination of three words meaning exit from…	**BOACHA** In the direction to… On the way to…
BU-LA-KE To make dust. BU – dust; LA– emphasis letter; KE – to make.	**BOLEK** Destroy, demolish. *"Behold, the LORD will empty (Bokek) the earth and make it desolate (Bolek)". (Isaiah 24: 1)*
BO-KE To hit, to upset. The exact meaning of "*Bokek the country and Bolek it*" is "hitting the country and making it dust".	**BOKEK** Destroy, demolish.
BO-SUMA The literal meaning: dissipated smell; smell exiting. BO – get out; SUMA – smell.	**BOSEM** Pleasant smell dissipating out of something.
BALI Without, to prevent, non. Used usually as ending to denote negative.	**BELI** Without, only.
BALIMA A wooden pole in which the top end is split; used to build a hut.	**BLIMA** The common meaning "Bli Ma," without anything.

BAMBARA	HEBREW
BARA Work, to work for someone.	**BARA** To create something out of nothing.
GALO To uncover, to bring down.	**GALE** To find, to expose, to discover.
DA-BA-RA Mouth with power.	**DEVORA** (the prophetess) Josephus Flavius describes that "*Devora*" means to ask God for mercy.
DON Entering, penetrating, getting to know. The most appropriate interpretation of "*My Spirit shall not abide (Yadon)*" will be "My spirit will never enter man," and his years of life have been limited to a hundred and twenty, as written later in the verse.	**DON** From the book of Genesis; Chapter 6; verse 3: *Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide (Yadon) in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years."* This word has no meaning in Hebrew.
DYI-BON Sacrifice. Sometimes DYOLI-BON is used with meaning of "Blood Shed" but sometimes DYOLI is being shortcut to DYI.	**DIBON** Sacrifice. From the book of Isaiah Chapter 15, verse 2: *"He has gone up to the temple, and to Dibon."*
DA-DEGI The literal meaning would be "teach with mouth." DA – mouth; DEGI – to teach.	**DARDAKI** A teacher for young children.
KARA Belly.	**HARA** A pregnant woman with an enlarged belly.

BAMBARA	HEBREW
TO-TA-FO The literal interpretation of a three-word combination will be: "The law to bear and speak." TO – Law; TA – Carry; FO – speak. And it fits to "*and shall talk of them.*" In the Bambra language, the concept of TAFO, which is an amulet woven from wires with knots, is preserved, reminiscent of the fringes related to Talit (garment). Bambara people tend to wrap this amulet on a sick organ in the body for healing.	**TOTAFOT** The exact interpretation is unclear. Today this word is used as a description for phylacteries (Tfillin), and some believe that in the past it was an adornment carried on the head. Chapter 6; verses 7-8 of Deuteronomy states: "*and shall talk of them… you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets (Totafot) between your eyes.*"
YE-BAMA To be in an insulting position. YE – to be found, to be; BAMA – insult. From Chapter 25 of the book of Deuteronomy it is clear, that both YEBAM (male) and YEBAMA (female) were found to be in a shameful state. The YEBAMA for not giving birth to sons and not establishing her husband's "name in Israel," and the YEBAM for not wanting to marry his sister-in-law. The concept of YEBAM and YEBAMA became in the Hebrew language brother -in law and sister-in-law and their marriage, which was intended to relieve them from their (shame), remained in the language as "YABAMUTH".	**YEBAMA** A widow who didn't have sons. According to Israeli customs, a widow who did not have sons was entitled to demand that her dead husband's brother marry her to become his wife. The brother-in-law who refused to marry his brother's widow would have caused her an insult and she was entitled to repay him by insulting him in public. And this is described in Chapter 25 in the book of Deuteronomy: *Then his brother's wife (YEBAMA) shall go up to him in the presence of the elders and pull his sandal off his foot and spit in his face. And she shall answer and say, "So shall it be done to the man who does not build up his brother's house."*

BAMBARA	HEBREW
MAGA Touch, put the hand on something.	**MAGA** Touching, Laying a hand on something.
MAGA-FA Killing touch. MAGA – touch; FA – kill.	**MAGEFA** Epidemic disease that spreads quickly and harms many people.
MURU Knife.	**MORA** A knife; some think it is ointment.
MOSOMOSO Press, bend.	**MIZMEZ** Grope with your hands, squash.
MELE So be it. A word to express wonder at something. …What?	**MEILA** A word that expresses a kind of acceptance with a situation. Let it be.
MAN-DYE The papaya fruit.	**MAN** The Manna food that the Israelites ate in desert.
MNA To stop, catch, grip.	**MANA** Stall, stop, do not allow.
MERE A small cow.	**MERI** One type of Kosher cattle; fattened ox.
NOGOFI To cause damage, to treat cruelly.	**NEGEF** Plague, disease; obstacle.
NYAGALI Happiness, holiday, entertainment.	**NAGILA** We will be happy; we will be in a good mood.

BAMBARA	HEBREW
	NAHASH Snake, serpent. Three words meaning "snake." In the Bambara language. SA means both death and snake, and the Bambaras usually refrain from calling a snake by its name, out of fear to "not to open the mouth to the devil." They tend to call it DUGUMA-FEN, which means "the thing that is on the ground." In the same way, ancient Israelites used to call snake SA-RA-FEN, which means "the thing that kills." In the book of Numbers, Chapter 21 it says, "*And the LORD said to Moses, 'Make a fiery serpent'…So Moses made a bronze serpent..*" And SA-RA-FEN became "Saraf." Similarly, NA-KA-SA, which means "coming to kill," became NAHASH (snake); and TA-KA-SA, which means "going to kill," has become TAHASH (seal). It is also worth noting that the Hebrew word "danger" comes from the same source. SA-KA-NA means "death is coming," or "the snake is coming," which is "dangerous."
NYE-SUTARA The literal meaning would be "secret to the eye." NYE – eye; SUTARA – secret, hidden.	**NISTAR** Hidden, invisible to the eye.

BAMBARA	HEBREW
SE-TI-RA Hard hit. SE – Force; TI – Hit; RA – emphasis ending.	**STIRA** Hit with the hand. Generally, means a blow to the cheek, slap.
GEDI Sea. Hence the name "Ein (eye) Gedi" means "Eye of the Sea".	**EIN-GEDI** The name of a pond and a settlement on the shore of the Dead Sea.
FOLO A disease that causes suffocation. "*So that tumors (AFOLIM) broke out on them.*" Stuck in their throat, suffocation disease. (See SHETER).	**AFOLIM** It is commonly thought that this word means hemorrhoids. From the verse "*... so that tumors (AFOLIM) broke out on them.*" *(I Shmuel 5: 9)*
FARA Separate, divide, tear.	**PARAM** Untangle a stitch or separate sewn parts.
FARA-SE The literal meaning is "torn leg" or split leg.	**PARSA** The antler matter of the leg of grass-eating animals.
KAVA To make a miracle or an outstanding action.	**KAVAV** Swear or snipe.
KALAN To teach, to instruct, to educate.	**KALAN** Josephus Flavius testifies in his writings that "kalan" means "smart" in our language.
KERE Side, towards the side. "*But walk contrary (KERI) to me* "—but you walked away from me.	**KERI** Resist. From the verse "*And if by this discipline you are not turned to me but walk contrary (KERI) to me.*" *(Leviticus 26: 23)*

BAMBARA	HEBREW
SO Generous, kind. And from the verse "*The fool will no more be called noble, nor the scoundrel said to be honorable (SHOA).*" *(Isaiah 23: 5)* Apparently, to "SHOA" fits the interpretation of "generous."	**SHOA** Rich, according to the sense from the verse "*nor regards the rich (SHOA) more than the poor.*" *(Job 34: 19)*
SARAN To get stuck in the throat, to choke. Therefore, "So that tumors (Afulim) broke out (Yishteru) on them."- Choking disease got stuck in their throat. (See AFULIM)	**SHATAR** Break out; be hidden. The exact structure of the word is unclear from the verse "So that tumors (Afulim) broke out (Yishteru) on them." (I Shmuel 5: 9)
TO-RA The "Law". TO – law; RA– ending emphasis.	**TORA** The book of law that Moses gave the Israelites when they came out of Egypt.
TLO-MADO "To set the ear" or to listen. TLO – ear; MADO – to divert, to turn.	**TALMUD** Acquiring knowledge from listening to sayings of teachers, or from reading.
TERE-FEN "body spirit," or a symbol of the dead spirit. TERE – spirit; FEN – something or tangible body.	**TRAFIM** House idols. "*Now Rachel had taken the household gods (Trafim) and put them in the camel's saddle.*" *(Genesis 31: 34)*

Japanese – Hebrew

JAPANESE	HEBREW, ARAMIC (A)
ONO Suffering, sorrow.	**ON** Sorrow, soul pain.
ISHIN Honor, prestige, authority.	**ISHIYUT** An important or honorable person; personality.
OFUDA Sacred board or mascot.	**EFOD** Part of the high priest's clothing, which was intended to carry two stone boards on which the names of the Ten Tribes were written. *"And you shall set the two stones on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, as stones of remembrance for the sons of Israel." (Exodus 28: 12)*
ATARI The near area.	**ATAR (A)** Place.
HARUKA Far away.	**(derekh) ARUKA** Implied to a road (derekh) whose end is far A away from its beginning (ARUKA).
BATO To insult, to cause shame.	**BHATA (A)** Shame, disgrace.
BAAI Occasionally.	**BHADI (A)** During, while.
BOBI Preparation for defense (probably related to digging trenches).	**BUBITA (A)** Trench, digging.

JAPANESE	HEBREW, ARAMIC (A)
BAIRITSU Enlarge.	**BERUTZ (A)** To increase the measure, to fill to overflow.
BARERU To check, to discover.	**BARER** To check, to inspect, to choose.
GISHI Husband's sister.	**GISA** Sister of husband, or sister of a married woman.
GAIRAI Foreign, stranger, someone who comes from the outside.	**GER** Gentile who accepted the Jewish religion.
AYASHIMI Suspicion, doubt.	**HEHASHEM** To suspect someone who violated the law.
HAZUSU To disconnect, to remove.	**HAZEZ** To move something from its place.
HOROBOSU To destroy, to demolish.	**HAHAREV** To destroy, to eradicate.
TSUTSUSHIMU To be careful.	**HATSETS USHEMA** To inspect carefully without being discovered
HARA Belly.	**HARA** A pregnant woman with an enlarged belly.
ZAGYO To work while seated.	**ZAGA (A)** To sit in place; lie down, recline.
TEGUSUNE To be ready for collision, to be vigilant.	**HITNAGSHUT** A sudden contact between two objects, a military combat among armies.

JAPANESE	HEBREW, ARAMIC (A)
HO Law, regulation.	**HOK** Regulation or custom that must be obeyed.
HOKI Laws and regulations.	
IHO Illegal.	
KIZUKU To build; probably connected to building fortifications for strengthening.	**HIZUK** Reinforcing.
TABESUGI To eat too much.	**TAVZIG (A)** A meal with friends.
IRU To shoot, to hit.	**YERI** To shoot bullets or arrows in order to hit.
KOBUSHI An ancient military person.	**KOVESH** conqueror, occupier.
IIATERU To guess right.	**LEATER** To limit to one location, or to discover the right location, to locate.
YADORU To dwell temporarily, to stay for overnight sleep.	**LADUR** To live, to dwell.
KIAWASER If something will happen ("Ki Yevasru" – If informed).	**LEVASSER** To inform or to tell someone about an important event.
KIKIAWASERU To investigate something.	

JAPANESE	HEBREW, ARAMIC (A)
IAWASERU Happened by chance.	
IIAWASERU To make early preparations (if informed).	
HAYAMERU To hurry, to do quickly.	**LEMAHER** To do something quickly, to hurry.
KOMEGURA A storage warehouse, primarily for rice.	**MEGURA** A storage warehouse for grains.
MAKERU To fall.	**MIGER** To defeat or destroy in war.
MIGAMAE Inclination, position with respect to something.	**MEGAMA** Target, inclination.
NAGARE River.	**NAHAR** A big river.
NUGUU To wipe.	**NIGEV** To wipe dry with a cloth.
NOKEMONO To boycott, to remove from the group.	**NEKAMA** Revenge.
SAGIRI Light fog.	**SAGRIR** Rainy and wet weather.
URESHISA Happiness, cheerfulness, joy.	**URU VESISU** A call for happiness.
YURERU To shake, to vibrate.	**ORER** To awaken.
HITSU Sorrow, bitterness.	**ETSEV** A state of mind resulting from sorrow.

JAPANESE	HEBREW, ARAMIC (A)
ITSUMO All the time, always.	**ITSUM** While, during… (used in phrases such as be'itsumo shel yom "during the day").
TSUWAMONO Military person. MONO – young man, person	**TSAVA** Military force drafted for war.
SEIDAKU A great heart, tolerant.	**TSADIK** The one who follows the way of justice and benefit others.
TSUMIHOROBOSHI To request forgiveness for sins. The word consists of two Hebrew words, "TSOM" (fast) and "HURBAN" (destruction). Remained in Japanese to commemorate the destruction of one of the Temples.	**TSOM** Fasting, refraining from eating for the purpose of suffering.
TSURA Face.	**TSURA** Image or look of someone.
SEIYO West, intended probably for Jerusalem, which is located Westerly of Japan. A Hebrew way to denote wind direction, like YAMA – Westerly (sea direction), KEDEM – East (the direction from where the Israelites came to Canaan in ancient days), and TEIMANN – South (in direction of Yemenite).	**TSION** Nickname of Jerusalem or the State of Israel.
KOBETSU To repeat from house to house.	**KABETS** To assemble people together from different places.

JAPANESE	HEBREW, ARAMIC (A)
KAKARU To capture, to catch.	**KOKARA (A)** Trap.
KUZUZU To destruct, to destroy (to turn to clods).	**KZOZA (A)** Clod, crumbled soil.
KINEN Memorial, commemoration of the dead.	**KONEN** To mourn, to eulogize.
ROSHU Bad habit, habit of the corrupted.	**RASHA** A sinful person, or harassing others.
RONNAN Criticism of someone, accusation.	**RINUN** Spreading rumors which defame a person.
SABETSU To note, to distinguish.	**SHABETS** To include someone for a duty; post; insert.
SAIBETSU To divide into secondary partition.	
SHITTA To command a military force.	**SHITA** An organized way to carry out an operation; method.
SHIKUMI Plan, planning.	**SHIKUM** Rebuilding, bringing something to its previous state.
SAKE Alcoholic drink made of rice.	**SHEKHAR** An alcoholic drink made of fruits or grains.

JAPANESE	HEBREW, ARAMIC (A)
SHIMONI Inferior people, servants.	**SHIMEON** (Tribe) The Shimeon tribe was considered the most inferior among the Israeli Tribes, and it did not have its own land.
TSUTAERU To provide accountable information, to tell.	**TEUR** explanation, description.
TAYORI Information, news, knowledge. Probably remained in Japanese from the expression "LATUR ET HAARETZ" *("...to spy out the land")*. To bring information. *(Numbers 13:2)*	**TAYAR** A person who comes to tour.
MEMURU To fall asleep, to nap.	**TENUMA** A light sleep.
NEMURI Nap, sleep.	

Japanese – Bambara

JAPANESE	BAMBARA
BACHI Punishment.	**BASI** A bad thing.
BIKA To beautify.	**BUGA** To adorn.
DEAI Meeting, interview.	**DYE** Meeting, gathering.
DONIN The same person.	**DO-NIN** Same thing.
FUI Wind direction.	**FYEN** Wind.
GUN Army, army units.	**GON** Ambush.
GUNDAN A military unit.	**GON-DA** Powerful ambush. It is customary to think of "GONDA" as Aramic. But perhaps it was used by an underground army that operated from ambushes. And after the size of "GON" units increased the meaning changed to Army.
GORAKU Entertainment, amusement.	**GORAGA** Great joy.
GURENTAI Rioters.	**GUIRIN** To attack someone together.
IDOKORO Address.	**I-DO-KORO** The Ancient belonging.

JAPANESE	BAMBARA
IKENAI Not allowed.	**I-KE-N-AI** Do not do.
JAAKU Evil person, wickedness.	**DYUGU** Bad, ugly.
JIRIN A dictionary that shows meaning of words.	**DYIRA** To show, to display.
HARA Belly.	**KARA** Belly.
KIRU To cut, to shorten.	**KARI** To tear, break, crash.
KISEI Enthusiasm, vigor.	**KISE** Active, brave, diligent.
KONYAKU Engagement.	**KONYO** Engagement.
KORO An old man.	**KORO** Old, ancient.
KINO Yesterday.	**KUNU** Yesterday.
KURUMA Car, vehicle.	**KURU** Car, boat.
KURURITO To come back.	**KURU** To come back.
MINA All, everyone.	**MINOU** All these which…
MINIKUI Bad, ugly.	**MIN-KOYA** That which is bad.
NEGAU Wish, desire.	**NEGE** Want, wish.

JAPANESE	BAMBARA
SABAKI Law, judgement.	**SEBE-KE** To do justice.
SAN Mountain.	**SAN** High.
SHIBO Wish, desire.	**SIBO** To hope, dream.
SHIN Truth, reality.	**SIN** To go the honest way.
TEMA Time.	**TUMA** Time.
TOKONOMA Every Japanese home has an open closet, which is made as a recess in the wall, intended for placing decorations and ornaments.	**TO-KONOMA** “To leave inside” or “to set inside”.
WARI Unlike Bambara, in which “WARI” means money, in Japanese the word remained an aggregated term, in which with other words it creates many concepts that relate to money.	**WARI** Money, or something that has the value of money that could be used for exchange. In many places in Africa, people use a special type of shells that are called “KUWARI” and serve in an exchange like money.
KANEMAWARI To be in a good financial state.	**KA-NEMA-WARI** To be in a good financial state.
WARIBIKI Discount.	
GAKUWRAI A special discount for students.	

Japanese – Persian

JAPANESE	PERSIAN
ABIRU To immerse in a bath.	**AB-RU** The literal meaning: “water over”.
ABISERU To pour water on someone.	**AB-SAR-RU** To pour “water over the head”.
BASSHI The youngest child in the family.	**BACHE** baby, young child.
BIRO Impolite, rude.	**BI-RU** Faceless, arrogant.
FURU To fall down, to come down.	**FURU** To come down, to dive downwardly.
JINKEI Preparation for battle.	**JANG** War, battle.
KOJI Lane, path.	**KUCHE** Path, narrow street.
RIHAN Rebellion, uprising.	**RAHA** To free, to leave.
YARO Young man, an unknown person.	**YARU** Young man, an unknown person.

Japanese – Turkish (Mongolian)

JAPANESE	TURKISH
ADA Enemy, hater.	**ADAVET** Hate, hostile.
BERABO Awful, illogical.	**BERBAT** Dirty, bad.
KAIGO Remorse, repentance.	**KAYGI** Worry, sorrow.
KAJIN Beautiful woman.	**KADIN** Woman.
YABAN Wild, uncultured.	**YABAN** Wild, recklessly.
YAMAJI Mountain track.	**YAMACH** Rocky elevated road.

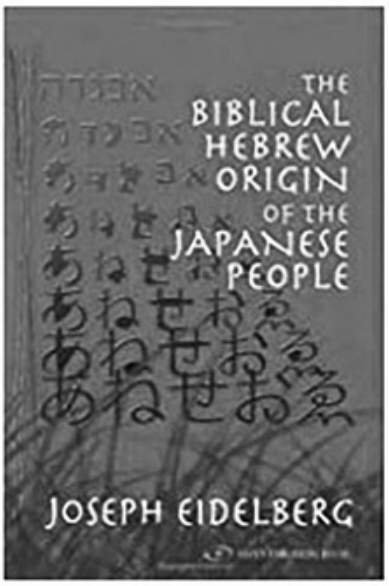
Complex Japanese Words

AKIMEKURA
A person who does not know how to read. The word is made of the Bambara word A (“he”); the Hebrew word KI (“that”); a negative Turkish word ME; and the Hebrew word KORE (“read”). The combination of all these words generates the meaning of “That does not know how to read.”

MAMIZU
Fresh water. The literal meaning is “table water,” and the word is assembled from the Hebrew word MEI (“water of”) and the Persian word MIZ (“table”).

NEGAWAKUWA
To be hoped, I hope. The word is made of the Persian word NEGA (“to see, to expect”) and the Hebrew word LEKAVOT (“to hope”). The resulting combined expression is “see and hope”.

Additional Books by the Author



While studying African languages, the author discovered to his surprise that the Bambara tribe, which resides in Mali...is speaking «Ancient Hebrew» and eats «Manna» every day. While trying to explore how the Hebrew language reached West Africa, he found out that names of many sites in Africa were mentioned in the Bible and are on the route of the Hebrews from Egypt to Canaan. Hence, he concluded that most of their wanderings «in the Desert» the Hebrews spent in Africa.
Some five centuries after the Hebrews arrived in Canaan, the «Ten Tribes» were exiled. But they did not get lost. The fact, that in the language of Japanese people, there are many words that survived from both the Hebrew language and the Bambara tribe serves as a «connecting link» between the Israelites and the Japanese.
AL
EGYPT
MALI
NIGERIA
SUDAN
ETHIOPIA
KENYA
INDIA
INDONESIA
ANGOLA
NAMIBIA
ZAMBIA
MOZAMBIQUE
MADAGASCAR
TURKEY
KAZAKHSTAN
PAKISTAN
CHINA
Arabian Sea